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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Julie D. E. Hendrix entitled "Memory and History in the Modern French Novel: Patrick Modiano and the New Orientation." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in French.

Karen D. Levy, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

Chris Holmlund, John Romeiser

Accepted for the Council:
Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

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Memory and History in the Modern French Novel: Patrick Modiano and the New Orientation

A thesis presented for the
Master of Arts degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Julie Hendrix
December 2002

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Introduction

L'HISTOIRE EST UN ROMAN DONT LE PEUPLE EST L'AUTEUR. -- L'esprit humain ne me semble se soucier du VRAI que dans le caractère général d'une époque;... indifférent sur les détails, il les aime moins réels que beaux, ou plutôt grands et complets.

- Alfred de Vigny[1]

During the twentieth century, historians began to reevaluate the techniques used in the study of history in an attempt to redefine the notion of "truth" in history. This process of reexamination, referred to as historiography, resulted in a new appreciation for the connection between history and memory. Through revisions in philosophical thought and the re-analysis of historiography, a new conception of memory as the foundation for all history expressed a revolutionary view of the relationship between memory and history. This challenging reconfiguration of the relationship between memory and history contrasted with the previously conceived notions of what defined and separated these two domains. The reexamination of memory and history affected not only historians, however, but also novelists, who for centuries have woven these two areas dealing with perceptions of human experience into literary creation.

Before further exploring the manner in which this revolutionary concept influenced literature, let us first define the terms "history" and "memory." History is the study, interpretation, and retelling of events, dates and facts that are linked through temporal continuities and which rest upon the evidence of occurrences in real space and time.[2] The historian analyzes the artifacts and written records left by earlier generations in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the past, and thereby attempts to recreate an objective account of that period. Memory -- which has until now been viewed

as a purely personal, subjective phenomenon and therefore, something outside of history -- is an elusive, largely unverifiable process of creating virtual connections based on information, experiences, emotions, and a host of other factors. Memory is often considered to be the uniquely personal act of an individual resurrecting his subjective past. In contrast, history is considered as the objective reconstruction of the past based upon facts that, although interpreted by historians, are essentially indisputable.[3] Traditionally, then, memory and history, both anchors to the past, represent opposing ways of approaching the past.

Although their roles appear to be independent, a revision in historiography has revealed that history could in fact be considered as the written mode of memory.[4] How would written records be recorded if not through the process of memory? It is precisely our ability to remember which has allowed mankind to record history, which in turn permits us to study history so that we may learn from our past. This also reveals that the chasm dividing memory and history is not actually quite as vast as was originally believed. In fact, it could be said that they are interdependent. History would not exist were it not for memory, nor would memory be sustained without the written records necessary to prompt and retain those memories.

The interdependence between memory and history, while deeply profound, leads to a great deal of speculation. There exists a void between events as they actually occur and as they are remembered. To restate, an individual's remembrance of events, even if recorded as the event transpires, varies considerably and leaves much to interpretation. The past then becomes a form of selective memory.[5] Similarly, it is also important to note that not all of the factual details of what happened in history are recorded or even known

(*MRC* 9). Therefore, even factual history depends to a great extent upon the biases, understanding, interpretations, and analyses of the individuals who write history. Furthermore, each person who reads these accounts provides a further level of interpretation. Yet, the essential distinction differentiating memory and history resides in the fact that memory is precarious, varying at times even within the same individual depending on the passage of time, influencing biases, differing perspectives, and a host of other factors. History by contrast, which relies predominantly on the recitation of facts and events substantiated by various forms of data (numbers, dates, death tolls, etc.), represents an attempt to reproduce an objective account of historical events in the context in which they occurred.[6]

Earlier I stated that history could be defended as the written record of memory, and thus I defined history as the attempt at an objective reproduction of factual events. However, memory is much more complex, since it emphasizes the emotional and psychological perceptions that an individual weaves into the remembrance and recounting of factual events. The ability *to remember* is involved in the recording of history, but memory itself has numerous definitions. David Gross[7]defines four types of memory, the first three of which have been studied in depth by psychologists. *Semantic* memory refers to remembering words, their meanings, and the associational relationships between them. *Propositional* memory deals with the recollection of specific kinds of information such as math formulas or the causes of WWI. Procedural or *implicit* memory concerns the recall and repetition of learned skills that are accompanied by physical action such as playing an instrument. The fourth type of memory, which Gross states carries the greatest meaning and value of memory for life, -- and consequently likewise

carries the greatest significance for this study -- is *episodic* memory.

Gross defines *episodic* memory as the recollection of particular events that an individual has experienced at some earlier point in his or her life. These memories have specific beginnings and endpoints and may be characterized by their own emotional tone or aura, but they are the memories of elusive things: goals, ideals, intentions, symbols, emotions, states of mind, earlier selves and more. Given the elusive nature of *episodic* memories, which are at least difficult if not perhaps even impossible to categorize and define, little scholarship has focused on this type of memory (*LT* 11-13,20). However, it is precisely *episodic* memory that will form the focal point of this thesis. The very nature of these memories, which can be neither measured nor precisely analyzed, relegates them to the realm of the spiritual, intangible and ethereal. This provides an excellent setting for imagination, which is associated with works of fiction. Within the context of these definitions of history, memory, and the relationship between the two, let us now move from the realm of non-fiction to examine the roles of both history and memory in the realm of fiction.

Any fictional work may make reference to historical events or persons, but when the goal of the fictional text is to recreate in a fictionalized manner the events of the past by using historical figures, this is called historical fiction. While the goal of non-fiction historical texts is to attempt to reproduce factual historical events, which often carry an impersonal connotation, a work of historical fiction refers to a "real" past but without claiming to reproduce it with scrupulous accuracy. (Of course, as Dr. Patrick Brady reminds us in his study *Memory and History as Fiction*, the differences between academic history, which is in itself significantly subjective, and historical fiction are not

as great as might be thought.) Therefore, the historical novel "is distinguished not by its being fiction, but by the greater degree of fictionalization involved and by the consciousness or explicitness of this fictional status" (*HM* 18). As the interpretation of the "facts" may vary among historians depending on personal influences, so too does the author of fiction interpret those same facts and historical accounts to achieve his own understanding of that information. For the historical novelist, however, his interpretation may or may not be supported by the facts that have been recorded -- which is quite acceptable, since his works are, after all, fiction. The author of historical fiction can "recreate" history *without* truly reproducing it, as the historian, by contrast, strives to accomplish.

In historical fiction, history is overly subjective, for its portrayal is altered according to whose perception is considered. This perception is based for the most part on the memory, either of an individual experience or that of another, written down and recorded as history. According to Brady, "Memory is used in literature to relate the present to the past, thus uniting two distinct moments (points or sections) either of history, or of the author's life, or of an evolving plot line" (*HM* 19). In literature, the memory of an individual or a group, whether fictitious or otherwise, creates history. In other words, memory becomes history, and as a result, history and memory are viewed as interdependent, if not at times synonymous. This blurring of the parameters separating memory from history represents one of the predominant concepts that prompted a reinterpretation of historiography. While historians do not intentionally portray history subjectively but attempt to isolate the memory of a source and proceed to render a more objective account, the novelist relishes his memory sources with the intent of exploiting

their subjectivity. In so doing, the novelist emphasizes the subjective memory of an individual or group whose memories are formed from personal observations and subjective perceptions. The purpose of valorizing the subjective over the objective is to establish a more personal rapport with the reader who, through similar behavior, also creates an individual opinion of events or ideas. In this manner, the author of historical fiction possesses the means by which to establish a more intimate relationship with the reader and thereby speak more directly to the individual reader's yearning for a more personal association to the past.

Intertwined in this desire to connect to the past is the need for affirming or perhaps reconstructing one's self identity through the retrieval of one's collective past, for memory does not represent a purely individual phenomenon, but relies heavily upon the memories passed down through the generations of one's collective past. Collective memory refers to the traditions, values, and experiences from which a people's sense of identity is shaped and which is traditionally transmitted orally (*MRC* 7). It forms the cultural authority of a group of individuals who share a similar past constructed from the reshaping of practices which characterize their culture and distinguish it from that of others.[8] According to Maurice Halbwachs, individual memory, which stems from one's personal experience, would fade into oblivion without the support of group confirmation that is gained through maintaining collective memory.[9] Emphasizing the importance of this dimension of human experience, Pierre Nora and his colleagues who collaborated on *Realms of Memory* explore the collective memory of France as revealed through its representations and systematically examine the "memory places" (*lieux de mémoire)* of French national identity from the time of the Middle Ages to the present. According to

Nora, these "memory places" are symbolic sites, monuments, buildings, objects, historical figures, and writings which are associated simultaneously with imaginary representations and historical realities in order to form French social and cultural identity.[10]

As Lawrence D. Kritzman, who wrote a comprehensive study entitled "Between Memory and History," emphasizes in his foreword to the translated version of Nora's *Realms of Memory*, the essential element in the creation of "memory places" is *imagination.* Individuals construct imaginary links to a particular place or object with a specific period or event in history and remember them as inseparable. With the passage of time, these associations are embellished to the point that they become the symbols of remembrance for an entire people. As symbolic "memory places," their role is reciprocal. First, the people hold the responsibility of remembering these places or objects and of passing down this "memory" from one generation to the next. Second, "memory places" in turn inevitably remind the people of their significance by their very presence and recall to mind one's responsibility to the memory they represent. This memory process is what creates collective memory. As such, collective memory is a socially constructed notion based in a coherent body of people whose individuals are charged with the duty of remembering and recalling those memories to the collective body.[11] Thus, as Halbwachs states, "It is, of course individuals who remember, not groups or institutions, but these individuals, being located in a specific group context, [who] draw on that context to remember or recreate the past" (*CB* 22). The places of memory that Nora and his team analyze, as well as written and verbal forms of memory, such as oral traditions and mythical stories, serve as the repositories for the recollection of these collective

memories.

It should also be noted that memory requires a continuous supply of collective sources and is sustained by social and moral props.[12] However, in an era when society values the new over the old, progress over tradition, and the future over the past**,** collective memory has been greatly diminished. Yet, the same society that has diminished the role of living rituals and devalued the importance of memory feels alienated and disconnected from the past and consequently has no basis for preparing for the future. It has lost its sense of communal identity. Thus, at the end of the twentieth century, the possibilities for valorizing and experiencing living memory in society have become fewer and fewer as individuals' lives have become more fragmented.

This loss of a sense of community stems precisely from the erosion of collective memory. In order to compensate for this loss, individuals are reduced to enact what could be termed a "self-quest" to seek connections to their own pasts. The self-quest involves revisiting one's place or places of birth and childhood, recovering objects that hold a particular value for the individual in that they recall a specific memory, and revisiting monuments or buildings that hold a specific value for not only the individual, but also for others whom the individual knows as a means of collecting the pieces of information necessary in forming connections to one's past. The information gathered through the self quest often leads to some form of writing, whether of a personal journal or a bolder project. The act of writing has a cathartic effect in that it relieves the individual of a psychological burden, that being the guilt associated with not remembering and as a result, not bearing the implicit responsibility of passing on a memory.

As a means of compensating for one's lost past, a renewed desire to retrieve

individual identity has resulted in investing personal memory with new importance. Memories are retrieved as well as created through the amassing and exploring of traces (*RM* 11). Traces consist of tangible objects, such as buildings and objects of remembrance like paper records, books, archives, mementos from the past, etc., that in some way divulge factual information that is useful to recalling the past and to orienting one's memories in relation to specific events. They are the material, concrete, and visible forms of an image of the past (*RM* 8). A particular place or building can represent a tangible trace since, as Pierre Nora points out, it serves as a repository for collective memories. Traces can likewise be constructed from episodic[13] or intangible forms of memory, such as scents, sounds, goals, ideals, intentions, symbols, emotions, etc. and the connections that an individual forms between his intangible memories and those that are tangible. One avenue for recapturing one's heritage, finding one's roots, and perhaps also for retrieving the shattered identity of one's country manifests itself through the search for the *lieux* (places) that embody the memories of historical events and that can prompt intangible forms of memory to surface.

The feeling of estrangement that individuals experience concerning their pasts, which incites them to enact self-quests to reconstruct their fragmented identities, forms the basis of the reconfiguration of the traditional historical novel. By concentrating on episodic memory, which enables the reader to recall similar memories from his or her own past, the new orientation permits the reader to identify with the memories of the principal protagonist(s) and therefore identify more closely with the history concretized in the text. Hence, this kind of a fictional work successfully presents what non-fiction history and traditional historical fiction can only attempt: a successful rememoration -- "a

history that is interested in memory not as remembrance but as the overall structure of the past within the present" (*RM* XXIV). As we shall see, the successful incorporation of memory into history is the key characteristic of the new orientation or reconfiguration of historical fiction, which has the power to invest relics of past eras with life, thereby enabling the reader to participate in the dramas described.

One of the most important aspects of the new orientation novels for creating an atmosphere in which the reader can identify with the text, and which distinguishes them from traditional historical fiction, concerns the choice of protagonist. The traditional historical novel founds itself upon a true historical past and real individuals who lived in the past but portrays them from a fictionalized viewpoint. Furthermore, these protagonists whose pasts are fictionalized are what one could call high profile characters. They are the famous heroes or heroines or the infamous villains who actually did exist in history. As such, the novelist seeks to attract attention to his or her uniqueness, to the quality or characteristics that make this person an important historical figure.

Moreover, the traditional historical novel focuses understandably upon known historical facts, although the author freely manipulates them according to his interests. What the historical novelist manipulates above all, however, are those details which cannot be easily or perhaps ever truly known: motives, emotions, causes, individual reactions, and any aspect which belongs to or derives from the individual psyche. Through his knowledge of past history, he then develops an understanding based upon his perception of that historical period or event, combines his perception with his own experiences and imagination, and creates an individualized account based in, upon, or around that historical period or event.

By diverging from the facts, the novelist creates ambiguity, which is a key element in the creation of historical fiction, for it allows the author to create new possibilities and thereby arrive at different conclusions.[14] Literature need not simply reflect the society of a specific period for reasons of entertainment but may be used for didactic purposes as well. The freedom that the fiction writer possesses is the possibility to contest the accepted taboos of the prevailing norms and values and perhaps to suggest new options.[15]

While the works manifesting the new orientation also manipulate facts and use imagination in reconstructing the protagonists' pasts, these works also reconfigure the traditional historical novel and pose new challenges in two significant areas. First, the characters who are chosen, whether as the main protagonist or not, are not exemplary in any way; they represent individuals who could have lived during that period, or a real person of whom very little is known. The most important difference here is that while the traditional historical novel focuses on the *uniqueness* of certain historical figures, these new fictions of history focus on the commonness or *everydayness* of their characters, on the qualities or characteristics of the character to which the reader can most easily relate. The protagonists of these new works are not the heroes or famous people of whom we have read or studied in our history classes, but rather the average individuals of ordinary life.

While these new works explore the lives of characters born more from the author's imagination rather than the lives of authentic historical persons, their stories do unravel during a genuine historical period. Similar to traditional historical novels, the context of the alternatively reconfigurated novels is historically grounded. However,

while the historical details noted by these authors indicate the dates of actual events and places where real events occurred, these details do not comprise the heart of the story. Rather they serve to establish the authenticity of the historical time frame. It is the context of the historical period during which these novels unravel that is vital to the story much more so than the factual details of specific events. In the fictional works that we will explore, the era of World War II serves as the historical context in which the individual protagonists struggle and to which they return in search of answers to their personal quests, and as such encourage us as readers to engage in similar undertakings.

The differences between traditional historical fiction and the reconfigured texts we will explore are significant in that they reveal a dramatic shift in the perception of history. To reiterate, although the traditional historical novel is based upon an actual historical period, without which its story would lack meaning and purpose, the great difference between these novels and the ones that we will examine is this: for the late twentieth century author, it is the theme, the atmosphere of the socio-political climate of the time which is vital to the creation of the text. Actual historically proven facts concerning events and specific occurrences are important insofar as aid in establishing the historical context; they hold secondary significance in comparison to the feelings, sentiments and emotional state of the individuals whose experiences are set forth in these fictional texts. However, since both kinds of texts relate to an historical period, some critics have theorized that these works of literature are not legitimate forms of literature. Perhaps the most vociferous of this group is Pierre Nora himself, who laments what he terms “a loss of literature.” He states that “memory has known only two forms of legitimacy: historical and literary. These have run on parallel tracks but until now have

always remained separate... History has become our substitute for imagination" (*RM* 20). According to Nora, the revival of both the historical novel, albeit reconfigured, and personal memoirs represents a replacement for faltering fiction in an epoch devoid of what he terms real novels and from which he concludes, "thus do we mourn the loss of literature" (*RM* 20).

In contrast to this negative vision, we will explore the richness of these reconfigured texts and reveal their capacity to recreate that which no longer exists and of which there remains only the slightest, if any, trace. The very essence of literature *is* imagination, for as Hutton remarks, "in oral traditions, memory is presumed to be the archetypal form in which imagination is vested" (*AM* 17). From oral traditions was born literature that, as a story, is "a sort of natural container for memory . . . a way of sequencing a set of images through logical and semantic connections into a shape which is, itself, easy to retain memory."[16] Moreover, Wolfgang Iser, in examining the reading process, reaches this conclusion: "the fact that completely different readers can be differently affected by the "reality" of a particular text is ample evidence of the degree to which literary texts transform reading into a creative process that is far above mere perception of what is written."[17] Through the interaction of creative imagination and episodic memory, the contemporary historical novelist seeks to enable the reader to get as close as possible to the experiences of everyday protagonists to develop a profound sense of intimacy, which in turn, can lead to the formation of an intense personal memory for the reader. As a result, this memory forms an enduring impression that can then function as a personal memory of shared experience. To restate, contrary to Nora's opinion that the late twentieth century lacks real literature, the contemporary French writer Patrick

Modiano declares that “de toutes les formes d'écriture, la forme romanesque est la plus habilitée à donner l’odeur du temps. Le roman est donc enclin par nature à parler des choses et des gens disparus, à évoquer les ombres du passé.”[18]

To illustrate this counter-approach to Nora's pessimistic view of literature, we will explore two of the most haunting and psychologically complex of Patrick Modiano’s most recent works that represent a reconfiguration of the traditional historical novel. The historical era of World War II and the Occupation, one of the most tumultuous periods in French history, is invoked in one form or another as the focal point around which the novels are centered and in which Modiano undertakes an anguished, solitary quest that is transformed into a poignant summons. In Modiano’s works, the WWII era represents both a catalyst to recover as well as an anchor to retain the past, and, as we shall see, to revive a sense of the collective memory that formed among those whose paths crossed during those years. By combining episodic memory with historical facts, Modiano explores both the trauma and the ambiguity of this period.

This thesis will explore the relationship between history and memory, the ways in which they interact during this tumultuous period in French history, and the role of episodic memory in relation to collective memory in Modiano’s *Voyage de noces* and *Dora Bruder.* Both texts will be examined with respect to the following three issues: the significance of the individual protagonist, the way in which the protagonist/narrator guides our perception of events and of the past, and the different ways through which memory is evoked. We will explore Modiano’s texts to illustrate how these three prominent characteristics differentiate the reconfigured texts from the traditional historical novel. We will discover how fiction relates to history and how the author

relates both to the past and to the present. In conclusion, we will explore the essential role that these texts play in the effort to find traces of one's own past, which can lead the reader to develop a new sense of collectivity and engender a much broader sense of responsibility for both the past and the future.

Chapter I

The Relationship Between Patrick Modiano, the Reader, and the Text

Patrick Modiano has emerged as one of the most enigmatic and complex writers of contemporary France. The earnestness with which he engages upon various quests for self identity and his preoccupation with the obliteration of the past attest to his dogged determination to address and illuminate an era that, in the wake of WWII, had remained for so many years forbidden in the hopes of covering up a past that was deemed better off forgotten. Born in Paris on 30 July 1945 of immigrant parents, "his childhood was profoundly marked by memories of the Occupation, the Deportation, and the atmosphere of menace and clandestinity that had haunted the years just before his birth."[19] Modiano's Jewish father and Belgian mother had met in Paris during the Occupation. His father survived by assuming a false identity, which he shared with one of his friends, and engaging in uncertain "business" practices involving the black market, while his mother, consumed by her own acting dreams, was frequently absent and constantly attempted to send Modiano to various boarding schools.[20]

Modiano's ambivalence towards his father's activities during the Occupation and subsequent abandonment of the family left a void that Modiano seeks constantly to fill by searching for answers to his father's activities and placing himself - through his characters - in his father's place. However, it was the death of his ten-year-old brother Rudy in 1957 from a blood disease that had the most profound impact on Modiano. In an interview with Pierre Assouline, Modiano confessed that "le choc de sa mort a été déterminant. Ma recherche perpétuelle de quelque chose de perdu, la quête d'un passé brouillé qu'on ne peut élucider, l'enfance brusquement cassée, tout cela participe d'une

même névrose qui est devenue mon état d'esprit."[21] Modiano had been so close to his brother that he even went so far as to say "je ne lui ai pas donné d'existence individuelle. Pas de prénom. C'était toujours 'mon frère et moi'" (*FT* 6). As a result of Modiano's early life, which was characterized by instability, loneliness, and a sense of emptiness that was only partially overturned by his marriage and the birth of his first daughter, his works are permeated by the feeling of nostalgia and the search for self (*OD* vii.). Through writing, Modiano is able simultaneously both to construct and to re-discover his lost identity, for as Colin Nettlebeck asserts in his study of post-war France's literary scene, "it is the process of writing that is the most important in the resolution of what is in origin a severe, perhaps even pathological, identity crisis."[22]

Among the emerging texts of the late twentieth century that reconfigure the traditional historical novel, Patrick Modiano's works represent some of the most poignant and psychologically provocative literary creations. De Drouillard singles out the aspect of Modiano's literary style that differentiates his work from that of other novelists: "C'est d'abord cette obsession de ce temps passé et son art du flashback qui diffèrent Modiano des romanciers de son époque."[23] It is Modiano's persistent obsession with the "retour en arrière," frequently going back in time combined with going forward to the present, that sets him apart from his contemporaries. Rather than simply retelling or re-enacting an historical tale, Modiano distances his narrator/protagonist temporally from the "main" story in both *Voyage de noces* and *Dora Bruder* and relies more on episodic memories rather than facts to create a provocative and profoundly engaging text. This separation in time places the narrator in a sort of intermediary position between the principal protagonist and the reader, because while the narrator/protagonist is still a character in the

story itself, he does not belong to the story of the main protagonist. Rather, he places himself almost in the same position as the reader but closer in time, if not by association, to the protagonist and the text, and therefore, serves as an intermediary who guides us on a journey into the past.

Both texts are written in the first-person, as if the narrator is recounting his own as well as the protagonists' stories; then, the narrator becomes a character as well. In his study entitled *A Theory of Narrative,* literary theorist F. K. Stanzel defines three basic types of narrative situations: first-person narrative, authorial narrative, and figural narrative. Each of these situations is distinguished by what Stanzel terms mediacy, that is the temporal distance of the narrative in relation to the present reality of the fictional text. In first-person narrative, the mediacy of narration belongs entirely to the fictional realm of the characters of the novel whose narrator also belongs to this same fictional world. In the second situation involving the authorial narrative, the narrator offers an external perspective from our world, which is distinct from that of the characters' world. In the last situation, the figural narrative, the narrator becomes a reflector-character: "a character in the novel who thinks, feels and perceives but does not speak to the reader [as] a narrator," thus giving the impression of direct presentation instead of narration. In the latter case, "the illusion of immediacy is superimposed over mediacy."[24]

In both *Voyage de noces* and *Dora Bruder,* the narrator is also a character, but one who attempts to describe a world of the past to which he does not necessarily belong, the world of the fictional character he seeks. Similarly, the reader does not really "belong" either to the protagonist's or the narrator's worlds, even though the fictional world is based upon reality and historically grounded in a real past. Through figural narrative,

Modiano succeeds in presenting not one but two worlds whose respective existences do not appear to be as distanced from the present as one might normally experience in reading an historical text. The similarities between *Voyage de noces* and *Dora Bruder,* involving figural narration and Jewish adolescent female protagonists who live in the same time period and find themselves in similar situations, bond these two works together in a manner that distinguishes them from Modiano's other texts. Moreover, on closer inspection, their differences mark them as two separate parts in a complex process of connecting with the past and constructing one's own identity.

Concerning *Voyage de noces*, the narrator guides the reader into the past through the tenuous thread of his relationship with the female protagonist Ingrid, whom he met on two occasions in the past and with whom he shared a brief acquaintance. The narrator implores the reader to accept his role as intermediary between our world and that of the main protagonist whose world he explores. Through this process of delving into the past, the narrator/protagonist shows us as readers how to relate to a relative stranger through second-hand acquaintance and to accept the narrator's memories and speculations as plausible realities in reconstructing that person's life. This then is the first step in reconstructing the past and in affirming self-identity: as readers, we learn to reconstruct a stranger's life based upon the second-hand information and experiences that the narrator presents. Although this "acquaintance" is purely fictional, the experience of reconstructing the life of someone with whom an individual came into contact only briefly permits us as readers to make the final leap in *Dora Bruder.* This text represents the second step in the process, for the reader learns to retrace the life of a person who actually did live in the past, but who died before the narrator/protagonist ever made her

acquaintance.

Embedded in this process is a third dimension, which is that of the narrator's relationship to the reader. In reading first *Voyage de noces,* we as readers accept the narrator's intermediary role as the acquaintance of a person from the past. Through second-hand acquaintance, we as readers, together with the narrator, pursue the traces of this person's life to assemble as much as possible the pieces of her story, albeit an incomplete one. By learning to relate to a stranger through second-hand knowledge, we are further prepared for the more complicated final step that is presented in *Dora Bruder*. In this text, the protagonist Dora is a real person who actually lived during WWII, but whom the narrator never met. The narrator places himself in the same position as the reader, on a quest to search for the past of someone who really existed, but who remains essentially unknown. The only knowledge the narrator has at the beginning of the story is the name and description of Dora Bruder that he remembers having read in a newspaper: "On recherche une jeune fille, Dora Bruder, 15 ans, 1m55, visage ovale, yeux gris-marron, manteau sport gris, pull-over bordeaux, jupe et chapeau bleu marine, chaussures sport marron. Adresser toutes indications à M. et Mme Bruder, 41 boulevard Ornano, Paris (7)."[25] He draws us as readers into his search to uncover this girl's past and invites us to engage in the process of starting from a few bits of information not only to recreate a stranger's past, but also to forge a bond with that stranger in the process.

As a result of the similar roles that the narrators play in *Voyage de noces* and *Dora Bruder,* these two texts are intimately connected as previously described in a manner that differentiates them from other texts by Modiano. Not only do the two Jewish protagonists Ingrid and Dora resemble one another in spirit and in the context of the

situations facing them, they also represent two facets of Modiano's quest, first the fictional attempt and later the real quest, to uncover the past of the real person Dora Bruder. While the narrator/protagonist Jean in *Voyage de noces* actually met the person whom he is seeking, their relationship was tenuous. Aside from a few stories that Ingrid divulged about her past and the few sketchy details that he was able to amass concerning specific events in her life (that she was an "orphan", crossed the line of demarcation during WWII to enter into the free zone with Rigaud, went to America for five years but then returned to France), he really knows very little about her. All of his musings, the stories he tells about Ingrid and Rigaud's first meeting, their escape, their time together on the coast and in Paris, are all a product of Jean's imagination and are used to fill in the gaps that occur as a result of incomplete information.

However, from his brief encounters with Ingrid and the few facts or memories she shared with him, the narrator/protagonist Jean reconstructs her past while interweaving memories and accounts from his past and present situation into his quest. These "personal" details serve several roles. They act as episodic memory traces from Jean's own memories of the time he spent with Ingrid and Rigaud and the details they revealed from their lives. They enable Jean to empathize with Ingrid's plight by associating his own experiences from past activities or states of being with what he imagines her situation to have been like. They also inspire Jean to seek the similarities between his situation at different times in his life and that of Ingrid. Finally, the details of Jean's life serve as a means of forming a connection between his life and that of the protagonist. Since this relationship is based upon perceived similar experiences, at least on an emotional level, it indicates to us as readers how to relate to our predecessors in a manner

that allows us to form connections to the past.

The situation is different in *Dora Bruder* where the narrator/protagonist begins with only a trace of information, just as does the reader to whom the narrator divulges this piece of information: an announcement for a missing fifteen-year-old girl under the heading "D'hier à aujourd'hui" (*DB* 7, "From yesterday to today."). As previously noted, neither the narrator nor the reader ever met this girl, but she was a real person who actually existed. The narrator therefore seeks out tangible traces, such as documents and archives, in order to draw a brief sketch of her existence, consisting of facts, dates, and places. Once the narrator discovers where Dora lived, the places she frequented, and the events in her life that were recorded, he visits these places and buildings where such events occurred. Since the narrator knows the history of these buildings in relation to the roles they played in Dora's life, they become for him *lieux de mémoire* that contain the memories of Dora's experiences. The reader simultaneously follows the narrator and participates in the search for these bits of information that are used to reconstruct Dora's life.

Although the narrator does not know Dora, he does know the neighborhood in Paris where she had lived. Having spent time as a teenager in the same area of the Ornano boulevard as Dora, this area represents a sort of *lieu de mémoire* from his own childhood. The narrator/protagonist therefore begins with reminiscences of his own youth spent in some of the same places as the young girl, thereby developing a rapport with her from the outset of his undertaking. Since he knows the area and can recall his own memories while searching for traces of Dora, the narrator leads the reader into his own as well as Dora's past. This mixing of pasts serves to blur the distinction between past-present and past-

past so that the reader, in gaining familiarity with this area of Paris through the repetition of dates and place names, can also feel as if he is familiar with the area and begin to form a personal memory of that place and time period. This association of memories leads us as readers to create what might be called a network of memory ties that brings us that much closer to both protagonists.

Through the narrative process of resurrecting one's own past while struggling to reconstruct the past of someone else, Modiano demonstrates not only how to create connections to the past, but also how to approach one's individual past to construct self identity. Consequently, the quests that the narrators undertake in both texts represent as much a search for answers to historical enigmas as a self-analysis on the part of the narrator and, to a certain extent, of us as readers as well. Through his journey into someone else's past, the narrator begins to examine his own past, and in turn, invites the reader to likewise delve into his/her past experiences. However, this sort of personal quest, through which the narrator jumps from past to present and back again while intertwining two separate stories, but without fully completing either story in its entirety, creates narrative discontinuity. The narration appears to be discontinuous because the narrator is telling two distinct stories simultaneously, one about himself and another about the protagonist whose past he seeks to uncover. Nevertheless, in recounting these two tales, the narrator readily compares his life experiences with those of the protagonist. In so doing, the narrator leads us in the step-by-step process of relating to a stranger from the past by forming an intricate network of associations and connections that, despite apparent discontinuity, paradoxically produce a poignant synthesis.

This process of re-visiting the past and then forming connections with the present,

which tends to create narrative discontinuity, can be compared to the double-sided process of psychoanalysis. Similar to one undergoing psychoanalysis, the narrator recalls the memories that hold a special significance for him. Like the analyst, he likewise pursues and pieces together traces of the protagonist's past, which in turn serve to create a memory of her existence because they record specific events that occurred in her life. However, since these memories are chosen seemingly at random, they are sometimes difficult to connect because of the temporal gaps separating them. According to Freudian theory, the psychoanalyst attempts to work backward from the autobiographical present in order to reconstruct a coherent account of the past. Similarly, he looks to the past for the necessary material needed to explain the present.[26] Thus, from accounts in the present, the analyst reconstitutes the past and uses past accounts to reconstruct the present in order to attempt to understand and explain it.[27]

In Modiano's texts, however, it is the narrator who both recalls or seeks out and creates memories. Beginning from his present, the narrator invites us as readers to work backwards with him to discover why he is obsessed with the protagonist. He then pieces together the traces he discovers and the memories he forms to create a coherent account of the past and describe its relationship to the present. In other words, the narrator plays the dual role of both analyst and the one being analyzed. Through this process of self-analysis, the narrator must search within himself to form connections that will lead to the answers he seeks. In so doing, the narrator may recall not only pleasant events and occurrences believed to have been forgotten, but also those that are disagreeable or unintentional. If, as Paul Connerton states in *How Societies Remember,* "to remember, then, is precisely not to recall events as isolated; it is to become capable of forming

meaningful narrative sequences" (*HSR* 26), then we as readers must also piece together the clues to the pasts of the protagonist and the narrator, as well as his own, in order to create meaningful associations between past and present.

In the process of working both backwards from the present and forwards from and within the past to retrieve the traces of Ingrid's and Dora's experiences, the narrators in *Voyage de noces* and *Dora Bruder* teach the reader to "fill in" the voids that exist between the points of each trace retrieved. While the traces representing the facts that anchor the story remain concrete, the "fillers" are purely fictional, since no one could or most likely will ever know precisely what happened to Dora Bruder during her times as a runaway. Nevertheless, they allow the reader and the narrator to imagine himself in the protagonist's position and then to incorporate personal speculations into the creation of the texts. Through his imaginings, the narrator pieces together a fragmentary but plausible account of Dora's and Ingrid's existences that allows us as readers to further develop and speculate on the protagonists' pasts, which in turn enhances the connection that we form with the protagonist.

While the stories concerning the two protagonists, Ingrid and Dora, are low profile events and therefore more open to reconfiguration, the choice of these two young female characters is significant for a number of reasons. First, both protagonists are ordinary individuals. They are not the famous historical figures of whom authors typically write, nor are they exemplary in any distinguishable way. As such, the very commonness of these protagonists elicits an appreciation for the ordinary individual and everyday experiences. This calls attention to both the commonness of the protagonists' lives in relation to the reader's and also to the importance of individual choice and action.

Both protagonists are also Jewish, and they find themselves in predicaments that are not unlike the same precarious situations in which the Jewish people as well as other marginalized groups found themselves during the Occupation. Some individuals fought against the constraints and limitations they faced, others accepted them, and still others embraced them in order to profit from the situation. The fact that Ingrid and Dora neither accept nor ignore the perils of their respective situations reveals their courage in facing reality and in searching for a means of survival. It is for this reason that Modiano chooses to write about these particular protagonists as common "heroines". By recognizing the ordinariness of the protagonist, the reader is then better able to relate to the protagonist and to imagine herself in that situation.

Secondly, the choice of a young female protagonist also signifies the author's intent to emphasize the role of the traditionally weak and innocent, of the young and marginal individual whose voice generally goes unheard. As adolescents, they are still too young to have experienced much of life. As such, they have not learned to fear the dangers in life. They do not yet have as many responsibilities as do adults, but they have reached the point in life where the child begins to assume the role of an adult by leaving the safety of one's home and family to create her own life. Adolescence represents a crucial transitional stage between childhood and adulthood, symbolizing hope for the future and suggesting freedom.[28] As adolescents, both Dora and Ingrid concretize the intermediary stage between the past and the future -- just as the narrator himself acts as an intermediary between the protagonists of the past and the readers of the future. It also important to note that while these youthful protagonists have much less control over their environments and are therefore more vulnerable to the effects of changes that result in an

unstable environment, they also possess a much greater ability to adapt to change. Although virtually powerless, these young protagonists nevertheless attempt to exert a measure of control over their destinies, which shows that they possess a strength and resilience that will be further examined later in our study.

Modiano's choice of a female protagonist instead of a male is also significant. The vulnerability of a female character incites us as readers to empathize with her plight and to share in her suffering. Anne Taylor, who studies the use of female voices by male authors, suggests that an emotional attachment or connection to the protagonist is more likely to occur with a female protagonist, since "women have traditionally been perceived as having fewer emotional constraints than men."[29] The intimate association of a woman with emotion, far from denigrating her importance, further reinforces her validity as a protagonist because she feels more deeply than would necessarily a male character. A woman's closer connection to feelings is especially important to the novelists of the new configuration of the historical novel who seek to intensify emotional ties to a "lost" past. Moreover, according to Simone de Beauvoir, a man seeks the qualities in woman that he himself lacks and through which he hopes to attain self-realization (*MNF* 4). Hence, "the author's female characters exemplify an encounter with the author himself, as well as with someone distinctly alien [(meaning the reader)]. A fictional masquerade becomes then not only a pleasure, but a need, a therapeutic act" (*MNF* 4).

The choice of a female over a male protagonist likewise offers certain artistic advantages. While a male protagonist has numerous actions and options open to him, a female must act under the constraints placed on her by society (*MNF* 5). A young girl is especially vulnerable because she lacks the greater physical strength of a male and

because she is both constrained by and outside the patriarchal power structure. This vulnerability forces her into both a protective and a defensive mode, to which Jean in *Voyage de noces* is strongly drawn (*MNF* 5). Her vulnerability also reinforces her marginal status -- and consequently that of the Jewish refugees fleeing from the Gestapo whom she represents. As a result of the physical as well as societal differences distinguishing women from men, the experiences of women are strikingly different from those of men. It is precisely the female experience as distinct from that of men that is of the greatest importance to Modiano. As young girls, the protagonists more adequately represent the struggle of seemingly helpless individuals who nevertheless fight bravely for their survival, and in the case of Ingrid, experience the long term effects of that ambivalent experience.

Paradoxically, while the two protagonists Dora and Ingrid share the experience of a tragedy that affected millions of their contemporaries, neither seem to possess a sense of collective memory. Indeed, both girls appear to be disconnected from their own pasts. They lead fragmented, dislocated lives. Consequently, they represent concretizations of the loss of collective memory and seem to summon us as readers to acknowledge the importance of relating to a community and to the past.

Similar to Ingrid and Dora, contemporary readers also seem to be fragmented individuals, living in a century bereft of ties to the past. David Gross states that "memory now seems to be greatly played down, while forgetting at least in some quarters, has been reevaluated as something positive" (*LT* 2). In this context, Gross refers to the German critic Walter Benjamin.[30] According to Gross, Benjamin posited that the experiences of individuals in the twentieth century have become memories of isolated instances with

little to no awareness as to how that moment might relate to those of the past. He termed what he saw as the dominant mode of experience in the modern era *Erlebnis*, "meaning experience focused on each isolated instant... becoming increasingly fleeting, episodic, and fragmentary, since it had no real ballast, no firm grounding, in what had gone before" (*LT* 46).

Benjamin also identified another type of experience that involved memories with the most value for enriching everyday life. He termed this type of experience *Erfahrung*, whereby images from the past lodge in the present mind and are not forgotten. These images, however, are not necessarily those of everyday experience but "those that keep alive something different or divergent that may in fact be entirely incompatible with a present situation" (*LT* 46). He suggested that the incompatible images could be comprised of independent recollections from one's own past experience, or perhaps images which had never "consciously and explicitly" been experienced but remained lodged nonetheless within the individual's mind in the form of buried images, or even a combination of images from both the individual's past and that of a collective past (*LT* 46). Through the act of consciously remembering them, as through the process of psychoanalysis, these buried images become recognizable. As the individual becomes consciously aware of these memories and their relations to one another, he invests the collection of these memories with the layered, multifaceted quality of remembered experience (*LT* 43, 46). Hence, while participating in Modiano's quests to retrieve the pasts of the two protagonists, the reader is encouraged to not only remember personal memories from his own past, but also to begin to make associations among them and in relation to the stories of Dora and Ingrid.

The fact that Modiano chooses female protagonists demonstrates his awareness of the female situation in comparison to that of the men of the period and his valorization of the female voice. Instead of focusing on the female characters' lack of choice, he portrays the struggle of each girl in the face of extremely difficult choices in order to emphasize her effort to wield some power over her own fate. For Modiano, his creation of Ingrid and his obsession with the announcement he once read about a girl named Dora Bruder represent as much a discovery and recreation of his own self-identity as they do that of the two protagonists. Through their stories, Dora and Ingrid permit Modiano to attempt to reach his own past through them as he guides us as readers to similarly reach within ourselves. His reason for choosing these two protagonists is intimately linked with the personal connections he established with these youths through episodic memory. Let us now explore the nature of the episodic memories he invokes in the texts.

Chapter II

Memory and History in *Voyage de noces*

As one who seeks to reconfigure the historical novel, Patrick Modiano explores episodic memory[31] in relation to the period of the second World War in an effort both to encourage the reader to experience the emotional, sociopolitical tone of the war era and to compel the reader to recall a personal memory to which he can relate this experience. This chapter will focus on the nature of episodic memories and the manner in which Modiano evokes them in *Voyage de noces.* Through the connections that the narrator forms between the places he visits and his personal memories to those of a virtual stranger from the past, Modiano draws us back in time to experience the anguish of the Occupation in an effort to create a feeling of shared experience for both the narrator and the reader.

To reiterate the definition provided in the introduction, an episodic memory is the memory of elusive or intangible things, such as goals, ideals, intentions, symbols, emotions, states of mind, and earlier selves. It can also refer to a particular event that holds special meaning for an individual. David Gross emphasizes the value of episodic memories of specific events: "to a considerable extent, what an individual is or becomes is directly shaped not only by the nature of these autobiographical events, but by how they are interpreted and made use of later in life" (*LT* 12). The capacity for recollection, the willful and intentional recall of the past that is unique to human beings, makes it possible for individuals to mentally revisit events of the past, to consider them and their relations in sequence with one another, and to become aware of how we develop

connections between them. In this manner, the awareness gained by an individual who remembers and examines his past permits him/her, according to Gross, to see "how we always inherit in the present a residuum of identity from the past" (*LT* 13). Gross goes on to assert that, "of course, once events occur, they vanish into the past and are gone forever; they can never be exactly reprised as the events they once were" (*LT* 12). This means that even if the event is something repeatable, such as playing tennis for example, an individual can certainly repeat the experience of playing tennis, but he can never duplicate exactly any previous experience involving the same activity. It is the ensemble of impressions, feelings, and the tone that characterizes an event as an episodic memory that forms a singular, unrepeatable moment in time. Consequently, episodic memories are intangible, since they can be neither physically pinpointed nor precisely reenacted. Since an episodic memory refers to an essentially intangible experience, "episodic memory" will be used in place of an "intangible memory" throughout the remainder of this thesis.

While episodic memories are themselves the memories of intangible matters or experiences in an individual's life, it is important to note that an episodic memory can be called forth by both intangible substances, such as scents or sounds, as well as by tangible substances. The remembrance of an episodic memory can, for example, be triggered by an object, what Gross refers to as a "memory prompter" (*LT* 20). Memory prompters are tangible reminders that impel an individual to recall the past. These tangible prompters may be documents, books, archives, mementos, buildings (*lieux de mémoire*) and other objects of remembrance that are tied to the past.

In Modiano's works, tangible memory prompters are linked to and inseparable from intangible memory prompters. Specifically in *Voyage de noces* and *Dora Bruder,* he

seeks to communicate the complex relationship that intertwines both tangible and intangible memory prompters in relation to episodic memories and to emphasize their interdependency. In both works, the narrator actively seeks to remember and to create memories of a past from which he retains few or perhaps no prior memories. Central to this process of remembrance is visiting the places that are significant for the role they played in either Dora's or Ingrid's past, or for the narrator himself as a result of a previous encounter with the fictional protagonist, as is Jean's situation in *Voyage de noces*. By physically visiting these places and buildings, the narrator's vague sense of Ingrid's existence is confirmed by the tangible evidence of the places she frequented. He can imagine her presence in these places, begin to form associations with her, and fantasize about what she might have done or did in these places. In this way, the narrator and likewise the reader are able to form their own impressions of these neighborhoods that are connected to the memory of the girl who once inhabited or frequented them.

The importance of us as readers envisioning these neighborhoods is essential to the memory process. The reader, like the narrator, must feel connected in some manner to the (virtual) stranger and must be able to empathize with her before beginning to relate to her more intimately. This connection is strengthened and reinforced by a familiarity with the surroundings of an individual's dwelling, a tangible reminder of the past, for although the reader may never have physically visited the area, he or she is aware that it is possible to do so. In addition, we as readers can create an imagined map of the area that can serve as a point of reference and that consequently becomes lodged as a memory. Such details form the basis of creating a personal connection to the past.

While the use of tangible memory prompters can assist in the voluntary recall of

episodic memories, intangible memory prompters also play a vital role in the memory process. Since episodic memories are elusive, they tend more often to surface involuntarily and are triggered by some incidental sensation, some unanticipated impression in the present that recalls a past experience (*LT* 42-43, 48). This sensation might involve an odor that a person notices upon entering a structure that is associated in his or her mind with an earlier memory of another time and place. An individual might also see a young person whose attitude and personality remind the individual of his or her earlier self. Other examples include feelings of loneliness, fear, or comfort that an individual has associated with a particular place or sound. These types of stimuli and sensations are difficult for the individual to control or to create by force of will. As a result, while a person can actively attempt to remember a particular episodic memory from his or her past by, for example, visiting a home from one's childhood, an episodic memory more often tends to arise as the result of other intangible stimuli, such as the aforementioned examples, that are difficult for the individual to reproduce voluntarily.

The sporadic recall of episodic memories occurs in two different situations according to Gross. In his discussion on the essence of episodic memory, Gross refers to the philosopher Henri Bergson who, in his early work entitled *Matter and Memory* (1896), speaks of "independent recollections." These are essentially episodic memories, since these recollections "preserve specific and often very detailed bits of information, datable in time and locatable in space, about an individual's personal past" (*LT* 43). Bergson distinguishes those independent recollections that seem to arise of their own accord form those that are intentionally called forth. That is, the memories that involuntarily surface contrast with those that are voluntarily sought. For Bergson,

"voluntary recollections", as he calls them, are consciously summoned forth in response to some immediate situation to which these memories can be applied. In these circumstances, the memories that are evoked "are the ones most likely to be efficacious in illuminating some pressing issue or clarifying some anticipated course of action" (*LT* 44-45). The conscious mind then organizes these images that are "'analogous to' or 'contiguous with' a present reality that needs to be addressed" (*LT* 43-44) in an effort to clarify perception and understanding of the present.

While the mind directly controls and orients voluntary recollections, Gross states that Bergson is suspicious of the spontaneous nature of involuntary recollections because they "flash up unpredictably..., often throw one off balance, ...[and] bring forth remembered material that appears strange and unrelated to one's present situation" (*LT* 44). They tend to disorient and undermine the individual by their unexpected arrival that seems beyond one's control. However, Gross contrasts Bergson's opinion of involuntary memories with Proust who, writing in the same period, believed that it was precisely the spontaneous nature of these memories that made one believe they are somehow more realistic or valid and not simply a fabrication of one's mind (*LT* 49). Since they seem to originate instinctually, Proust declared that "only involuntary memories are able to capture the aura and richness of those singular, unrepeatable moments of the past... The most essential truths are those contained in the depths of memory and obtainable only by reflectively repossessing the material that emerges involuntarily" (*LT* 49).

As far as Modiano is concerned, his use of spontaneous involuntary recollections supports both theories, that involuntary memories tend to disorient the individual but that they also appear to be more realistic and enriching. In the first case, an episodic memory

involuntarily arises as a result of some unexpected sensation but appears to be completely unconnected to the present situation. As a result, it produces a feeling of disorientation. For example, Rigaud's involuntary remembrance of his mother and subsequent inadvertent introduction to the concierge in Juan-les-Pins "je suis le fils de Mme Paul Rigaud"[32] disconcert Rigaud initially. Although Rigaud is in the city he used to visit with his mother during the summertime, he did not voluntarily remember his mother and in fact, had, for many years, attempted in earnest to forget about her and his childhood altogether. However, as regards the second explanation of involuntary recollections, Rigaud soon realizes that his involuntary recollection is in fact "une formule magique" (*VN* 72), for the concierge remembers Rigaud's mother and consequently agrees without hesitation to help and protect him and Ingrid from the Gestapo. While the involuntary evocation of episodic memories assists Jean as the narrator in producing a more believable account of his quest, it also creates a more intense and enduring image of his experience that is not likely to be forgotten by the reader, but instead lodges in the reader's mind and later develops into a memory of remembered experience.

At first glance, the storyline of *Voyage de noces* may appear simple. Jean, a middle-aged man who produces movie documentaries, reminisces about two chance encounters he had with a woman named Ingrid. The first occurred twenty-four years in the past and the second, three years later. As the story develops, it becomes apparent that both Ingrid's life and Jean's relationship to her are much more complex than they at first seem. Jean begins his reminiscences with the last news he received about Ingrid, her suicide eighteen years earlier in Milan, and starts to retrace the little knowledge he has of her experiences. He works backwards in time until he reaches the beginning of Ingrid's

story as she had told it to him in their second encounter. As Jean tells her story, he is reminded of personal experiences in his own life, which he re-examines from a new perspective in light of their connection to Ingrid. As his memories progress, not only does Jean begin to view Ingrid's life with new understanding, but his own life takes on a new perspective as well.

Through a detailed analysis of *Voyage de noces,* we will explore the role of both tangible memory prompters and intangible catalysts in calling forth episodic memories. We will look at the five critical memories of Ingrid that Jean describes and the manner in which he compares them to both his past and present. Each is an episodic memory: first, the news of Ingrid's suicide; second, Jean's first meeting with Ingrid and her husband Rigaud; third, the story he was told concerning Ingrid and her husband's flight to Juan-les-Pins; fourth, Jean's second and final encounter with Ingrid; and lastly, Ingrid's story of how she met Rigaud. In analyzing each of these situations, we will demonstrate the role that episodic memories play in remembering the past, in forming connections to the present, and in reaching a better understanding of the influence that the past exerts on the present in order to learn from the past and positively act in the present.

Voyage de noces begins with Ingrid's suicide as the narrator/protagonist Jean remembers learning of it eighteen years earlier. After a bartender mentions that a woman committed suicide in Milan two days prior to his arrival, Jean decides to buy the newspaper so he can read her obituary. As he recalls that the bartender mentioned the woman was en route to the island of Capri, he wonders "quelle drôle d'idée de venir se suicider ici, quand des amis vous attendaient à Capri" (*VN* 15). Jean is confused by the fact that this woman, who was on her way to vacation with friends on the coast, would

commit suicide in the hot city of Milan. It is in reading the obituary, the tangible proof of her death, that Jean realizes he knew this woman. Although he tries to call Rigaud to find out more about the suicide upon his return from Milan to Paris that August, he cannot locate him. As the years pass, he admits that "j'ai commencé à voyager [et] leur souvenir s'est estompé" (*VN* 23). However, three years later, "une nuit d'été, à Paris où je me trouvais seul.... de nouveau, j'ai éprouvé le besoin de téléphoner à KLEBER 83-85" (*VN* 24). This time, he also receives no response and continues our travels, no longer occupied by the memory of this couple "[dont] nos relations étaient demeurées superficielles" (*VN* 23-24).

By chance, Jean finds himself in Milan again eighteen years later. He is no longer the young man he was eighteen years ago or when he originally met Ingrid. He is beginning to sense the passage of time: "Oui : dix-huit ans, j'ai compté les années sur les doigts de ma main" (*VN* 16). While sitting in the airport in Milan, he says, "j'ai pensé à cette journée d'il y a dix-huit ans, et pour la première fois depuis tout ce temps-là, cette femme qui "avait mis fin à ses jours"... a commencé vraiment à m'occuper l'esprit" (*VN* 16).

As the story unfolds, we realize that there are several reasons why Jean becomes overwhelmed with the desire to learn more about Ingrid's suicide. First, the memory prompter of the city of Milan itself is a tangible reminder of Ingrid. Second, it is summertime and he notices the contrast between the heavy rain on this day in June and the oppressive heat that had enveloped Milan on that day in August when he learned of Ingrid's suicide. This memory of the heat of summer is an intangible memory. Both tangible and intangible prompters coincide to prompt the recall of the specific episodic

memory of Ingrid's death. Since Ingrid committed suicide in August, the hottest month of the year, Jean's future summer experiences are tainted by "le malaise" and "cette surimpression étrange du passé sur le présent" (*VN* 27). He wonders "à partir de quel moment de ma vie les étés m'ont-ils soudain paru différents de ceux que j'avais connu jusque-là?... L'été du suicide d'Ingrid à Milan?.... Depuis longtemps déjà -- et cette fois-ci d'une manière plus violente que d'habitude -- l'été est une saison qui provoque chez moi une sensation de vide et d'absence et me ramène au passé" (*VN* 26). Jean not only associates Milan with "la chaleur qui vous isole encore plus" (*VN* 14), but also with the memory of Ingrid's death. However, Jean does not begin to truly question his concern over her suicide until he himself returns to Milan eighteen years after learning of Ingrid's suicide, twenty-four years after they first met. He also finds himself in an emotional state that he now assumes is quite possibly similar to that of Ingrid and Rigaud when he first met them, though as a young twenty-year-old then, he viewed them and their situation very differently: "j'avais à peu près l'âge d'Ingrid et de Rigaud et leur attitude, qui me semblait si étrange à l'époque, était la mienne ce soir" (*VN* 49). Jean's awareness of his own mortality constitutes the third reason for his growing preoccupation with the memory of Ingrid.

After this enlightening experience in Milan, Jean returns to Paris where he plans another expedition to Rio de Janeiro to film a documentary upon which he is currently working. However, the transit airport he chooses is in Milan: "Le billet d'avion pour Milan aller-retour, je l'avais acheté au hasard... J'avais choisi cette ville au hasard parmi trois autres" (*VN* 16). According to Jean then, it seems to have been an almost instinctual and impulsive act, some connection to the past sensed by his unconscious self, that

caused him to purchase a round-trip ticket to Milan departing at the same time as that for Rio de Janeiro. Indeed, he does not depart for Rio, saying that "un moment, dans cette salle de transit, j'ai eu la sensation de sortir de l'aéroport et de suivre, à travers les rues de Milan, le même itinéraire qu'autrefois. Mais cela était inutile. Elle était venue mourir ici par hasard. C'était à Paris qu'il fallait retrouver ses traces" (*VN* 19). Instead, Jean returns clandestinely to Paris, and as Alan Morris notes in his study of Modiano's literary undertakings, "instead of setting off on another mundane expedition, as planned, he returns to Paris, books into a hotel, and cuts himself off from his family and his friends."[33]

The decision to return to Paris was not made spontaneously. Jean explains his feelings when his wife Annette and their friends had accompanied him to the airport in Paris before his supposed trip to Rio de Janeiro: "Moi, je n'ai jamais aimé partir,... J'avais envie de leur dire que nous avions passé l'âge d'exercer ce métier qu'il faut bien appeler du nom désuet
d' 'explorateur'" (*VN* 17). Jean reveals his preoccupation with growing older but does not want to face it. His quest then is not only a search for answers to Ingrid's death, but a means of continuing his life as a vagabond. He feels "le besoin de fuir. Je le sentais en moi, plus violent que jamais" (*VN* 19), and refers to his job "qui n'en était pas vraiment un, mais une manière de poursuivre les rêves de l'enfance" (*VN* 18). Later, on the return flight to Paris, he feels "un sentiment d'euphorie que je n'avais pas connu depuis mon premier voyage à vingt-cinq ans" (*VN* 19). It is important to note that Jean embarks on the quest to retrace Ingrid's life secretly. He tells no one of his plans. One reason is that he wants to relive the carefree nature of the trips he used to take in his youth, such as

when he first met Ingrid and Rigaud. Another is his desire to escape his feeling of weariness. As he later tells his young friend and assistant Ben Smidane, "j'éprouve une certaine lassitude de ma vie et de mon métier" (*VN* 93). It is also a means of capturing the emotional spirit Ingrid felt when she met Rigaud. Like the individual he seeks, the narrator strikes out alone on a journey. It is essential that he make a physical break with his present reality before he can attempt to make one on the emotional level, which will then enable him to view life more from Ingrid's perspective. Consequently, Jean does not return home to his wife and friends, saying, "j'éprouvais le besoin de mettre d'abord une distance entre eux et moi" (*VN* 16). He in a sense "runs away," much as Ingrid did decades earlier.

The idea of separating oneself from everyday reality, wanting to disappear without dying, which as Jean insists, "Disparu, oui, j'avais disparu" (*VN* 18), has a double-sided motivation. Not only does he escape the boredom and alienation of his personal life, he is also able to communicate in the present while "reliving" the past. In an article analyzing the quest motif in *Voyage de noces,* Jurate Kaminskas likens Jean's quest to a trip into the realm of death itself -- reinforced by Ingrid's suicide -- and by the choice he has to make about whether to continue in this world or to return to the world of the living, his own life.[34] Before he leaves his wife and friends in Paris, he says, "je m'étais retourné vers leur petit groupe avec la pensée que je ne les reverrais plus de ma vie" (*VN* 18). Later, when Jean surreptitiously returns home one night on the fourteenth of July, he remarks, "la vie continuait sans moi" (*VN* 46) and imagines that "un silence de mort" (*VN* 47) would fall if he were to present himself at the Bastille Day party his wife and friends are having on the terrace. On another occasion, Jean makes reference to the

dream-like quality of his quest: “Tout à l’heure, au moment de rentrer à l’hôtel, j’ai eu la sensation d’être dans un rêve. J’allais me réveiller cité Véron. Annette dormirait encore. Je serais revenu dans la vie réelle” (*VN* 97). When he speaks of Annette, he calls her “ma veuve”, “car n’était-elle pas ma veuve si je décidais de ne plus jamais reparaître” (*VN* 47)? Jean’s role as an intermediary between the worlds of the living and the dead is further reinforced by the fact that, as Kaminskas notes, we are provided neither a physical description nor a description of his personality (*Q/E* 935). He is to a certain extent a “phantom narrator,” similar to the characters he seeks by following the shadows left in their wake (*Q/E* 935).

Jean’s decision to return to Paris instead of staying in Milan where the suicide occurred is likewise significant. In Paris, Jean is able to surround himself with tangible reminders of Ingrid’s existence, the places she inhabited and those she frequented. These *lieux de mémoire* enable Jean to retrace her existence and to uncover any details that might lead to unraveling the mystery of her suicide. By physically visiting these places while at the same time cutting off ties to the present, Jean can more adequately attempt to connect emotionally to Ingrid.

Having already rented a room in the Dodds hotel, he begins his quest by remembering his first encounter with Ingrid and Rigaud. Just as in the present, it was summertime and he was on vacation, but the summer when he met Ingrid is singled out among the others of his past: “Mais l’été où j’ai rencontré Ingrid et Rigaud était vraiment d’une autre sorte. Il y avait encore de la légèrté dans l’air” (*VN* 26) and “cet été-là, le malaise n’existait pas” (*VN* 27). Having been forced to hitchhike due to the theft of his funds on the train south from Vienna, he accepts a ride from the couple to Saint-Tropez.

He recalls that at first, " ils ne disaient pas un mot" (*VN* 28), but when they did speak to him, it was as if "nous nous connaissions depuis longtemps" (*VN* 28). The importance of this initial encounter stems from the feeling of unconditional support that Jean experiences. The couple offer him a refuge; they do not question him. They feed him, lodge him and entertain him by teaching him a card game, which, as he remembers, "Ce fut la seule fois de ma vie où j'ai joué aux cartes" (*VN* 36). Jean also accompanies Ingrid to a local store to do some shopping, after which they take a brief stroll through the park together. Although he is embarrassed to reveal the theft of his funds, he must finally admit that he must return to Paris the next day for lack of money. They immediately tell him not to worry; they will find him a place on the train tomorrow. The following day, Rigaud purchases a first-class ticket for Jean. Later, Jean discovers that they had also slipped some money into his bag.

All of this, the experience of freedom from responsibility or attachments and the seemingly carefree attitude of both Ingrid and Rigaud who so generously accept him without reservation combine to form a lasting impression on Jean. When they ask him to extend his stay at their bungalow, he is tempted as "de nouveau cette douceur, ce sentiment d'exaltation m'a envahi, comme lorsque je descendais avec elle la rue en pente" (*VN* 43). He is tempted by the alluring prospect of "se laisser vivre au jour le jour. Ne plus se poser de questions sur l'avenir. Etre en compagnie de gens bienveillants qui vous aident à surmonter vos difficultés et vous donnent peu à peu confiance en vous" (*VN* 43). At this point in time, though, as a young man of twenty, he felt compelled to return to his work. However, this feeling of "légèrté" and freedom from responsibility would beckon to him throughout the remainder of his adult life, and he would continue to live

his life in search of recapturing this feeling of exaltation.

As Jean thinks about Ingrid, his most vivid memory of her is of pale blue/gray eyes watching him, "toujours fixés sur moi" (*VN* 35). This intangible look that captivates him is marked by an expression of absence "qui m'intimidait" and the knitting of her eyebrows into a frown, which seemed to mock him gently (*VN* 39). He also recalls that when she intertwined her arm and his as they returned to the port after a short shopping excursion, "le contact de son bras et de son épaule me donnait une impression que je n'avais jamais ressentie encore, celle de me trouver sous la protection de quelqu'un" (*VN* 39). In analyzing the quest motif, Kaminskas points out the significance of this feeling of protection that Jean experiences while walking with Ingrid. He states that "les souvenirs de ses promenades avec Ingrid le long de la rue de la Citadelle reviennent hanter le narrateur et constituent une sorte de leitmotiv obsessionnel. Le narrateur se transforme en éponge qui absorbe les souvenirs des lieux" (*Q/E* 935). The episodic memories of both "ce regard" and the contact of her arm wrapped around his own profoundly affect him. With Ingrid, he not only feels safe but also "une sensation de légèreté" (*VN* 39). It is for this reason that Jean feels so strongly about Ingrid, for she makes him feel at once carefree but also safe. However, the feeling of "security" he senses is linked to a lack of responsibilities and ties that protect one from the demands of others but at the same time also hinder the formation of intimate attachments to others. With Ingrid's death, Jean is forced to re-evaluate his assessment of these feelings of "légèreté" and safety and their meaning for both Ingrid as well as for himself.

The episodic memories he retains from this first encounter revolve predominantly around this feeling of "légèreté". Jean seeks to maintain this feeling by continuing to

travel throughout his life, almost as if he saw in the supposed freedom of Ingrid and Rigaud the ideal state of existence -- free from attachments to the past and open to the future. He alludes to the influence this experience had over his life the last time he is with Annette and his friends: “Nous avions voulu très jeunes suivre l’exemple de nos aînés, mais il était déjà trop tard pour nous” (*VN* 17). Even before beginning his quest, Jean senses the passing of time that enhances his awareness of his own creeping mortality, and experiences a vague sense of unease with the direction his life has taken. He is fully prepared to abandon his life; yet he is uncertain of how to proceed and hopes that he may discover the answer by retracing Ingrid’s life.

Jean not only attempts to maintain this feeling of “légèreté” during his life, but he also seeks to mimic Ingrid’s lifestyle and behavior in other ways. He offers refuge to the young associate Ben Smidane, as Ingrid and Rigaud had done for him at the same age. Jean also seeks in Annette the feeling of protection that Ingrid’s presence had inspired. What first attracts Jean to Annette is her “douceur protectrice” (*VN* 18). Like Ingrid, Annette makes Jean feel safe and offers him protection from the reality of life. The refuge she offers consists of her willingness to support Jean’s lifestyle and to keep his secrets: “elle est assez habile pour brouiller les pistes, et les brouiller si bien que ce sera comme si je n’avais jamais existé” (*VN* 20). When he imagines Annette discovering his disappearance, his reaction is one of carefree nonchalance: “je ne me sens pas le moins du monde angoissé. Mais léger, très léger. Et je refuse que tout cela prenne une tonalité dramatique: je suis trop vieux maintenant” (*VN* 20). He even says that he will instruct Annette to write “un petit article dans un journal quelconque, annonçant la disparition de Jean B... que je me suis évanoui dans la nature au cours de mon dernier voyage au Brésil”

(*VN* 21). Much later, she continues to guard his secret, as she writes in a letter "je pourrais venir te retrouver..., comme on faisait il y a longtemps. Je le ferai en cachette... Je ne dis à personne que tu es encore vivant" (*VN* 93). Just as Ingrid offered unconditional support for Jean on their first encounter, Annette has taken the same role as Ingrid by offering Jean a refuge and unconditional support throughout the rest of his life. Moreover, she provides an anchor to the present of which Jean appears to be unaware until the end of the text, for as he 'disappears' into the past, she is the one who beckons to him and the reason for which he eventually returns to the present.

Jean has so completely appropriated the role of 'living phantom' that even when he clandestinely returns to his apartment, his mind is not on the present but on the past. As he listens to the sounds of the party on his terrace, he is reminded of another time when he lay in hiding with Ingrid and Rigaud the night he stayed with them, while listening to the noise coming from a different party. Jean seems to be living in a dead past, for he finds himself transported in time while secretly listening to the party goers, as he did over twenty years ago when Ingrid had said, "nous ferons semblant d'être morts" (*VN* 42, 49). His choice of words at this point reinforces his status as someone who has left the world of the living to walk among phantoms. It also reflects his ambivalence about returning to the present, for he says "un jour, je reviendrai parmi vous [mais] je ne sais pas encore la date précise de ma résurrection" (*VN* 49).

The second episodic memory Jean recalls is founded on the second-hand knowledge that either Ingrid or Rigaud had divulged during their time together. However, it is while sitting in a café that he is involuntarily reminded of them. Seeing a young couple seated at an adjacent table, he thinks back on his own youth. He imagines that at

their age, he and Annette must have looked much like them. This in turn reminds him of Rigaud and Ingrid: "Ce garçon et cette fille m'ont fait réfléchir à ma première rencontre sur la route de Saint-Raphaël avec Ingrid et Rigaud. Je m'étais demandé pourquoi ils avaient arrêté leur voiture et m'avaient invité chez eux avec un si grand naturel" (*VN* 54). He then wonders if perhaps he, like this young couple, reminded Rigaud and Ingrid of their own youth: "peut-être ma présence leur avait-elle été une distraction et un réconfort passager. Peut-être avais-je évoqué pour eux, fugitivement, un souvenir de jeunesse" (*VN* 55).

The memory from Ingrid and Rigaud's youth that Jean remembers them telling him is their flight to the safety zone in Juan-les-Pins in 1942: "ils s'étaient retrouvés à mon âge sur la Côte d'Azur" (*VN* 55). Rigaud was twenty-one and Ingrid, only sixteen when "ils avaient franchi la ligne de démarcation en fraude. Ingrid portait sur elle une fausse carte d'identité au nom de Teyrsen Ingrid, épouse Rigaud" (*VN* 56). Later, Rigaud would procure the documents necessary for their survival, even though "jusque-là, [il] avait ignoré... les papiers administratifs, les fiches d'identité et les certificats de bonne conduite" (*VN* 82). Suddenly, all of these papers were of immense importance because they constituted the deciding factor between life and death.

Although Ingrid and Rigaud had succeeded in reaching the Italian zone, the danger was not over, even though at first, "on faisait, à Juan-les-Pins, comme si la guerre n'existait pas" (*VN* 57). When, some weeks later, Rigaud noticed a man "vêtu d'un costume de ville..., son teint était d'un blanc laiteux, comme celui de quelqu'un qui ne s'expose jamais au soleil" (*VN* 63), he was forced to admit that "il aura suffi d'un tout petit détail pour gâcher ce paysage, une tache sombre" (*VN* 62). The false safety net had

collapsed and Rigaud became worried. From that day on, Rigaud worries constantly that the Gestapo agent will discover Ingrid's true identity as Jewish and arrest her. The next day, Rigaud notices the man again and this time, "l'homme semblait épier Ingrid" (*VN* 63*)*. The man's presence is a constant reminder of the danger threatening Rigaud and Ingrid. Again, in the evening of that same day, Rigaud senses once again the uncomfortable feeling of being observed. The agent irritates Rigaud by his incessant surveillance and in retaliation, Rigaud imprudently insults the man's choice of German over English cigarettes. One night, he finds the Gestapo agent pouring through the hotel register and rewriting the listed names in his own notebook. Rigaud's feeling of insecurity escalates, but he still withholds his fears from Ingrid so that she might remain at peace a little longer in the fantasy world in which they seem to be living at Juan-les-Pins.

On another occasion shortly after that fateful evening, Rigaud returns to the shore to retrieve Ingrid's forgotten sun hat and to check on the whereabouts of the Gestapo agent. As he is returning to the beach, he recalls that "le chapeau de plage ressemblait à ceux que portait sa mère il y a dix ans" (*VN* 70). He comes across the concierge walking slowly in front of him and once again, "il se souvenait de la villa, sur la route du Cap, où sa mère l'emmenait quelquefois visiter une amie américaine...[..] avant de l'abandonner dans le jardin où il jouait seul tout l'après-midi" (*VN* 71).

These memories of his mother arise involuntarily and disconcert Rigaud, for they are "de mauvais souvenirs... [qui] étaient revenus à cause du concierge" (*VN* 71). However, Rigaud does not escape this man who so unfavorably reminds him of his unhappy childhood. Rather, "une impulsion poussait Rigaud vers cet homme... il

craignait si fort qu'il pût arriver malheur à Ingrid, qu'il était prêt à s'accrocher à n'importe qu'elle bouée de secours" (*VN* 71). When the concierge turns to greet him, Rigaud unexpectedly blurts out "je suis le fils de Mme Paul Rigaud" (*VN* 71), and then wonders giddily how he could have uttered this particular phrase. "Pourquoi invoquer sa mère, brusquement, cette femme si peu maternelle qui l'abandonnait des journées entières..." (*VN* 71). However, this involuntary and unwanted memory of his mother turns out to be a blessing in disguise, for "le concierge avait redressé la taille, et paraissait si ému que Rigaud eut le sentiment d'avoir prononcé une formule magique. Il se demanda s'il n'avait pas choisi pour refuge Juan-les-Pins car cet endroit était lié à son enfance. Une enfance triste, mais protégée... Et voilà qu'il se servait d'elle en dernier recours" (*VN* 72).

By chance, Rigaud inadvertently speaks of his mother and consequently gains the confidence and assistance of the concierge who remembers her well. He agrees to help Rigaud as they speak quietly in a playground "où l'on se sentait en sécurité" (*VN* 74), once again invoking childhood innocence. The concierge offers to allow Rigaud and Ingrid to stay in the same villa owned by the American where Rigaud's mother used to take him. Rigaud's episodic childhood memories, even though unhappy ones, are linked to this area and to a time when he at least felt safe. He wonders if unconsciously he had been seeking to foster those feelings of safety and innocence by returning to the very same place, a *lieu de mémoire* from his childhood: "Il avait la désagréable impression de revenir au point de départ, sur les lieux de son enfance pour laquelle il n'éprouvait aucune tendresse, et de sentir la présence invisible de sa mère, alors qu'il avait réussi à oublier cette malheureuse: elle n'était liée pour lui qu'à de mauvais souvenirs" (*VN* 80).

Forgetting his unhappy childhood allowed Rigaud to continue with his life. Now, however, he is forced to face those unhappy memories, and even, more importantly, to find shelter in the very place that holds those memories for him. While remembering the past can be painful, it can also sometimes be crucial to surviving in the present.

Jean's meditations on Ingrid and Rigaud's experiences in Juan-les-Pins in turn trigger memories of his own trip to Juan-les-Pins when he was 21 years old, the same age as Rigaud when he and Ingrid were there in 1942. Jean spent time in this city the summer after having met Ingrid and Rigaud, but he didn't yet know that they had lived there: "j'ignorais encore qu'Ingrid et Rigaud y avaient vécu. J'avais fait leur connaissance l'été précédent et comme je ne les avais plus revus depuis, je les avais oubliés" (*VN* 86-7). The process of remembering Ingrid's past and in turn, relating it to memories of his own past, fosters within Jean a deeper sense of connection to this relative stranger. Likewise, the interweaving of the past and present, of personal and second-hand memories, demonstrates to the reader how he or she can relate to the past and to even briefly encountered individuals from the past. By supplying details from his personal life, Jean underscores the significance of his encounters with Ingrid and the impact that she had on him, even though they only met on two brief occasions.

Although the narrator attempts to remain completely cut off from the present during his quest, his reminiscences are periodically interrupted by his ties to the present. Ironically, Jean is being tracked even as he tracks the traces of Ingrid's existence. Like the bits of information and evidence Jean finds to reconstruct the life of Ingrid, Ben and Annette are able to locate Jean by "un bout de papier chiffonné" (*VN* 92) containing a list of the hotels that Jean left in his office. He is 'discovered' by his young protégé Ben

Smidane while visiting the African and oceanic museum at the Porte Dorée. When Ben says that he has come to speak with Jean on behalf of Annette, Jean says "j'avais feint l'indifférence" (*VN* 91). Secretly, he wants and needs his wife's companionship, but he does not want to admit this need to himself, even though he later acknowledges "j'ai guetté pendant quelques jours un message d'Annette" (*VN* 100). This unexpected encounter with Ben makes Jean realize that, as he says, "ma vie n'avait été qu'une fuite" (*VN* 95). However, after a few days, his unease subsides and he no longer awaits a call from Annette. His ambivalence about returning to his life becomes apparent when he says "je me sentais délivré d'un poids" (*VN* 100). He is not yet ready to accept responsibility and return to the demands that accompany human relationships; yet, he is also disconcerted by the unhappiness his absence has caused and perhaps, realizes that his absence makes him uncomfortable as well. He must successfully complete his quest soon in order to return to his own life.

In order to facilitate the progression of his quest, Jean decides to change his routine by dining elsewhere on another street, the avenue Daumesnil, in the hopes of stimulating his memory as well as his imagination. While strolling down the avenue, he says "je me suis mis à penser à Rigaud" (*VN* 100). When Jean began his quest, he was inspired to phone Rigaud as "je marchais le long du boulevard Soult....Ces contrastes de l'ombre et de la lumière du soleil couchant, cette chaleur et ce boulevard vide..." (*VN* 25). However, he could no longer remember Rigaud's first name and so gave up. This time, Jean decides to consult the phonebook again and carefully read through all of the Rigauds listed. Although the phonebook he finds is outdated by eight years, one name in particular captures his attention: "l'absence de prénom et l'adresse du boulevard Soult" (*VN* 101).

When he arrives at 20 boulevard Soult the following day, he discovers that a Rigaud had indeed lived in an apartment there with a young girl. However, the concierge informs him that Rigaud has not actually lived at this address in at least thirty years, since 1942, so Jean decides to rent the apartment himself.

Once in the apartment, Jean finds that this *lieu de mémoire* contains other tangible evidence of Ingrid and Rigaud's existence: a pair of skis, an old suitcase containing Rigaud's ski boots, a magazine photo of Rigaud at age twenty, an envelope addressed to Rigaud left in a drawer of the night stand, and the plaid bedcovers they left behind. He looks down on the boulevard from the rooms on the third floor where Ingrid and Rigaud had stayed, "un boulevard Soult différent de celui que [ils] avaient connu, et pourtant le même, les soirs d'été ou les dimanches quand il était désert" (*VN* 106). At last, Jean has been able to trace Ingrid back to this apartment, the one she shared with Rigaud before they fled to Juan-les-Pins. Surrounded by the tangible reminders of their past presence, Jean remembers the information Ingrid had told him about this place on their second and final unexpected meeting. Interestingly, Jean does not seem to have remembered the details of this second encounter with Ingrid until after installing himself in her old apartment, which is particularly significant because it was the last place Ingrid had stayed before abandoning her father and moving to the relative safety of the Italian zone.

While lying on the bed, Jean reminisces about the second time he encountered Ingrid, one evening in July, three years after their first meeting. He remembers "j'ai marché au hasard dans un quartier que je connaissais mal" (*VN* 112). The woman he notices walking unsteadily before him as if she is drunk turns out to be Ingrid. When he speaks to her, he imagines that, as he states, "j'étais sans doute la première personne à qui

elle adressait la parole depuis plusieurs jours" (*VN* 114). When Jean inquires about Rigaud, she replies noncommittally, "il est en voyage" (*VN* 114). In retrospect, Jean muses that "il me semble, à vingt ans de distance, qu'elle se trouvait dans la même situation que moi, ce soir, boulevard Soult" (*VN* 114). Remembering Ingrid's loneliness reminds Jean of his own emptiness, and he recalls that his friend Cavanaugh had rented an apartment a few years back in the same neighborhood where he ran into Ingrid for the last time. He wonders "peut-être, s'y trouve-t-il avec Annette" (*VN* 115). This thought reminds Jean that he is still alive and loves Annette. He also muses that "il n'est pas impossible qu'elle pense à moi" (*VN* 115-16) because he now realizes, just as did Ingrid when she attempted to see her father one last time, that relationships with others are what render life meaningful.

Jean and Ingrid spent their last encounter together chatting in a restaurant. At the time, Jean was still quite young and did not realize just how changed Ingrid was. Although, "sur le trottoir de l'avenue, je me demandais si c'était bien la même personne que celle de la Côte d'Azur" (*VN* 118), in talking with her he decided "non, elle n'était pas vraiment changé en trois ans" (*VN* 118). Later that evening, when he accompanied her back to her apartment, he remembered "cette fois-ci, elle cherchait un appui... et pourtant, au bout de quelques pas, c'était elle, de nouveau, qui me guidait" (*VN* 119). However, looking back on this night from the distance of twenty-one years, Jean remembers "je lui ai posé des questions et je me demande encore pourquoi elle y a répondu avec tant de détails. J'ai bien senti qu'elle n'avait aucune complaisance envers elle-même" (*VN* 118). He now imagines Ingrid "seule, dans son appartement, devant la même assiette et le même verre de bière, au fond de ce silence que je ne connaissais pas

encore à l'époque, et qui m'est si familier aujourd'hui" (*VN* 118). He is beginning to understand her attitude that day and the feelings of guilt and remorse she must have felt for having abandoned her father.

As he imagines this last encounter, Jean finds it much easier to remember the details Ingrid had divulged. He consults his notes from ten years prior when, one day, he had jotted down all of the information he could remember about Ingrid. He now finds himself quite easily transported from the warm summer heat of the present to that cold winter day of the past when Ingrid met Rigaud for the first time during the Occupation. It was the end of November 1941 and Ingrid was on her way home to the rooms she shared with her father, an Austrian Jewish doctor, on the boulevard Ornano. All of a sudden, "elle eut le pressentiment que si elle s'engageait sur le boulevard à la suite de ceux qui rentraient dans le dix-huitième, la frontière se refermerait sur elle pour toujours" (*VN* 127). She followed instead the boulevard Rochechouart to the ninth arrondissement, leaving behind forever "ce quartier noyé pour toujours dans le couvre-feu" (*VN* 128), feeling as if "elle avançait sur une passerelle étroite et qu'elle craignait, à chaque instant, de basculer dans le vide" (*VN* 128). She hesitantly entered a tea house but was then seized by panic, for the shop would close soon and she would have to go out into the rainy night to seek another shelter. She happened to notice two men sitting nearby, and the second time she exchanged glances with the brunette (Rigaud), "il lui a souri" (*VN* 130).

The words "vide" and "noyé" suggest that Ingrid barely escaped the danger that was awaiting her had she not chosen to take control of her own fate. If she had resisted the urge to flee the suffocation of her imprisoned neighborhood, she might not ever have

escaped. Instead, she would have perhaps been arrested, deported, and "lost" along with the millions of other victims of the Holocaust. The reason that Modiano singles out Ingrid is that she showed courage in leaving behind her life, one that was slowly being taken away from her by a greater force, and striking out alone to survive and create a new destiny for herself. However, he does not realize until decades later the price Ingrid paid. In fleeing the 18th arrondissement, she in a sense abandoned her father; not only did she leave him at a dangerous time, but she never even told him where she was. She never spoke to him again, and the guilt she carried for having never told her father good-bye and moreover, for having left him alone overwhelmed her and led quite possibly to her suicide.

After escaping the curfew, Ingrid did not attempt to return home but rather left the café with the young brunette named Rigaud who took her to his home. He offered Ingrid the phone so that she could call her father. Ingrid, however, left only a brief message for the clerk to transmit to her father: "Dites-lui que tout va bien" (*VN* 132). The following day, she did not return home but called to leave another message, - "Vous lui direz qu'il ne s'inquiète pas" (*VN* 137) - refusing to speak to her father who, as the hotel clerk informed her was waiting to receive her call in his room. As the days passed, she remained with Rigaud and did not call her father again: "Elle ne voulait plus quitter Rigaud et le boulevard Ornano lui semblait si loin..." (*VN* 137). In December, they moved to the apartment currently occupied by Jean at 20, boulevard Soult. On their way to the new apartment, "soudain, elle éprouve un vertige: continuer tout droit vers Monmartre et retourner à l'hôtel du boulevard Ornano par le chemin inverse de celui qu'elle a suivi l'autre soir pour s'éloigner de la zone du couvre-feu" (*VN* 140). She could

have returned to her father without giving up her new life with Rigaud, but she chose not to do so. Forgetting her past allowed her to pretend that she was no longer in danger. She made the choice to escape a dangerous situation and save herself. However, the negative aspect of her choice was the fact that she did not include her father and did nothing to help him escape the Nazis.

Ingrid revealed to Jean during their final encounter the remorse she felt at having left her father. However, Jean does not recall all at once his conversation with Ingrid from this second meeting. Instead, he interrupts his meditations to take walks and worry once again about receiving a call from his wife. For a second time, Ben Smidane finds him. This time he pulls up to the gas station across from Jean's apartment on the boulevard Soult in Annette's car. Ben explains that Annette fears that Jean is undertaking "une aventure sans issue" and that "elle m'a dit qu'elle n'a plus vingt ans" (*VN* 150). Now, however, Jean tells Ben that he must stay a few more days to complete *his* Mémoires (instead of a biography of Ingrid). Jean realizes how great a role Ingrid and Rigaud have played in his own life. At twenty, he had viewed Ingrid as the epitome of happy existence and had sought in many ways to emulate her lifestyle. However, dissatisfaction with his own life as well as the news of Ingrid's suicide cause him to doubt this lifestyle and search for new meaning in his life. He now admits that his search for the answer to Ingrid's suicide has more to do with himself and his current situation. When Ben tells him that he is leaving on a trip to the Indian Ocean, Jean says "vous avez de la chance d'être encore à l'âge où l'on peut partir" (*VN* 152), a comment that, as he inserts, "m'avait échappé" (*VN* 152). Jean can no longer run from responsibility or escape his life. Not only is he too old, but he has also begun to realize the fact that his travels

have been a means of escape instead of a search for adventure and, like Ingrid, that he cannot avoid his own sense of responsibility to others. Jean has finally begun to understand Ingrid's situation, but he still lacks some missing piece of information that will further enlighten his understanding of her suicide and the implications of this revelation for his own life.

When Jean returns to his room, he consults his notes once more and finds the missing persons add Ingrid's father had put in the newspaper after her disappearance, which Ingrid had carefully hidden in a folder along with other clippings from the Occupation years. At the moment when she gave it to him, Jean remembers "que son regard prenait une drôle d'expression, comme si elle voulait me transmettre un fardeau qui lui avait pesé depuis longtemps" (*VN* 153). Ingrid explained to Jean that one day towards the end of winter 1942, while still living with Rigaud in the apartment at 20, boulevard Soult, she finally decided to visit her father on the Ornano blvd. She wanted to speak with him and announce her desire to marry Rigaud. Yet when she arrived at the hotel and asked for the room keys, she learned that these rooms were now occupied by other clients. The clerk then told her that her father had been arrested back in December and sent to "une destination inconnue" (*VN* 155).

At this moment when Jean seizes upon the last missing piece in the puzzle of Ingrid's life, he receives a phone call. It is Annette, and although Jean recognizes her voice, he remains silent and then hangs up quickly. This 'phone game' he seems to be playing with Annette resembles the secrecy that Ingrid maintained when she called her father only twice after disappearing and refused to speak directly with him. Unlike Ingrid, though, Jean has been separated from Annette for some time now and is no longer

seeking to escape his life. He does however need to ponder a little longer his newfound insight. Therefore, he leaves the apartment and accepts a bicycle offered to him by the concierge's friend. As he glides through the streets of Paris on the bicycle, he notices some fallen leaves, "quelques feuilles mortes... le premier signe de l'automne" (*VN* 156). While pedaling, he realizes that all of these places, those from the past where Ingrid lived, places where Jean stayed with Annette when they were young, and the home he shares with Annette in the present, are all quite close to one another. Even temporally, the past and present begin to intertwine as if, while the wheels of his bicycle turn, "je remontais le temps" (*VN* 157). When he rides to the Ornano boulevard, he finds himself in front of the cinema "que l'on a transformé en magasin" (*VN* 157). Across the street, on the ground floor of the hotel where Ingrid and her father had stayed, he realizes "l'hôtel... n'est plus un hôtel mais un immeuble comme tous les autres" and "le café du rez-de-chaussée, dont elle m'avait parlé, n'existe plus" (*VN* 158). He now imagines what Ingrid felt, the day she returned to this neighborhood to speak to her father: "pour la première fois, elle avait éprouvé un sentiment de vide" (*VN* 158). Just as Jean cannot dispel his own feeling of emptiness for an unsatisfactory life, he understands at last that "ce sentiment de vide et de remords vous submerge, un jour. Puis, comme une marée il se retire et disparaît. Mais il finit par revenir en force et elle ne pouvait pas s'en débarrasser. Moi non plus" (*VN* 158).

The protection that Rigaud offered Ingrid, and that the concierge in Juan-les-Pins offered them both could not dispel the guilt and remorse Ingrid felt for having saved her life while abandoning her father. The narrator Jean is drawn by the ambivalence of her role as both a survivor and one who is racked with guilt. Jean's obsession with recovering

Ingrid's past is evidence of the narrator's perception of his own estrangement from the past, a past to which he is nonetheless intimately connected by virtue of his acquaintance with the deceased woman; and his need to retrieve the traces of the past also represent a desire shared by contemporary readers. From the seemingly incoherent bits of information discovered, Jean creates a coherent account of Ingrid's life. The intertwining of plausible details the narrator adds to embellish the fragments of information he has results in a story to which Jean can intimately relate. While remembering the details of Ingrid's and Rigaud's experiences, he is reminded of personal experiences in his own life. Jean's meditations enable him to see a connection between himself and Ingrid so that when at last he has reached the beginning of Ingrid's story, he begins to understand his own.

As Jean pieces together the facts he learned from Ingrid and Rigaud, he imagines what might have happened in particular situations. It is not made clear, however, just how much of Jean's notes are factual and how much imagined. For example, when Jean remembers from his notes that Ingrid and Rigaud had spent the spring of 1942 in Juan-les-Pins, he tells all about what they did there, how they felt, the people to whom they spoke. Although he says that Ingrid offered many specifics, it seems most likely that Jean fabricated many of the details, such as the conversations between Rigaud and the Gestapo agent or Rigaud and the concierge. These imaginings allow the narrator to explore Ingrid's life from his own perspective, even as he attempts to imagine these experiences from Ingrid's perspective. Similarly, we as readers, seeing the plausibility of the narrator's speculations and the manner in which he arrives at this point, can also speculate on Ingrid's life and in the process, learn how to retrace the life of a virtual

stranger from that person's perspective.

Nonetheless, due to the insufficient amount of information known or discovered about Ingrid's life, the story that Jean composes still lacks many details, which results in narrative voids. The first is the one day gap between the day of Ingrid's suicide and the day when Jean learns of her death (*ER* 144). The first meeting occured 23 years ago, the second and final encounter occurred three years later; she committed suicide two years after this last meeting. It is important to note that these voids are not only of a temporal nature, but also a manifestation of the psychological alienation that the narrator feels in relation to the character he seeks. As Jean emphasizes, "il ne reste plus que l'essentiel: les blancs, les silences et les points d'orgue" (*VN* 54). This conclusion unnerves the narrator who seeks to uncover the facts hidden and forever lost within voids.

It is important to note that Jean also recognizes that his own life has been characterized by voids as well - in the sense that he is forever searching, traveling from one place to another, always looking but never finding that which will make his life complete. He speaks of the void that his absence on the plane to Rio de Janeiro will cause for his friends and wife when they learn that he did not board the plane and no longer know his whereabouts. Instead of going to Rio, he decides to retrace Ingrid's steps in the hopes of recapturing the traces of her life. In the end, however, as Didier Bertrand concludes in his article on Modiano, Jean "prétend d'abord vouloir 'écrire une biographie d'Ingrid' (50), mais finit par écrire ses propres mémoires (151)."[35] In the act of searching for an individual whom he hardly knew and in reminiscing about her past actions in relation to the present, Jean begins to analyze himself and his own actions, both from the past and the present. As he attempts to describe her life, he attains more insight into his

own evolving self and reaches the conclusion that he, like Ingrid, is an empty form, ever-changing and lacking in social foundation (*DHA* 224). However, unlike Ingrid who is no longer living, Jean is still alive and quite capable of changing his life. He must overcome his own weaknesses in order to *return* to life in every sense of the word.

The apparent incoherence of the text and the alternation between past and present seem also to enhance Modiano's insistence on the role chance plays and the unexpected twists of fate that can instantaneously change an individual's life. For example, Ingrid's fear of returning home one evening and her subsequent encounter with Rigaud save her life. In another example, the narrator Jean begins his quest with the round-trip ticket to Milan that he bought "au hasard" the previous day (*VN* 16). Similarly, as Kaminskas points out, Jean attributes the similarities between himself and Ingrid to chance. Both are French and both find themselves in Milan in the same month of August. Jean muses that she must probably have traveled through Milan in a yellow taxi as he did, and that she also likely arrived in Paris at the same train station where he finds himself eighteen years after her suicide (*Q/E* 935-36). These seemingly insignificant details, which Jean sees as links between himself and Ingrid, ironically serve to reinforce the banal nature of their encounter. Providing seemingly trivial details paradoxically underscores the commonness of the fact that Ingrid could have been any other woman and Rigaud, any other man.[36] Moreover, we as readers are more easily able to imagine ourselves in the place of either character since their acquaintance was formed from a precarious, chance encounter.

The role of chance in Modiano's texts is also linked to the past and to the importance of remembering one's past. When Rigaud inadvertently blurts out his

relationship to Madame Rigaud, the concierge is awestruck because he happened to have known Rigaud's mother and liked her very much. Jean wonders if Rigaud and Ingrid stopped to give him a ride because he reminded them of their youth. If they had not stopped to pick him up, Jean would never have met them and would consequently never have experienced the cherished feeling that Ingrid inspired in him, that of being under the protection of someone. These chance occurrences illustrate the profound impact that a moment's decision can have on a person's life.

In the next chapter, the second phase of the memory process, that of relating to a complete stranger from the past, will be explored. Through the process of examining tangible traces of an individual's existence, Modiano seems to insist that only through memory does history acquire significance because the facts are never quite as concrete nor as complete as we would like. Piecing together the fragments of information and filling in as much as possible the voids stretching between them requires imagination as well as speculation. It is essential that individuals revisit the past in order to understand the present. However, the haunting pronouncement of the old concierge in the hotel on the boulevard Soult who says "les gens ne reviennent plus. Vous ne l'avez pas remarqué, monsieur?" (*VN* 110) echoes ominously the narrator's own discomfort with a time period in which people tend to forget the past. As readers and witnesses, we must sift through the fragmented incoherence of life to re-examine those meaningful episodic memories that shape our present. In so doing, we will learn to form the necessary connections that enable us to live a fulfilling and meaningful existence that recognizes the importance of shared experiences.

Chapter III

Uncovering the Past and the Quest for Truth in *Dora Bruder*

In December of 1988, Patrick Modiano chanced to read a missing persons add in a copy of the *Paris-Soir* dating back to 31 December 1941. The announcement read: "On recherche une jeune fille, Dora Bruder, 15 ans, 1m55, visage ovale, yeux gris-marron, manteau sport gris, pull-over bordeaux, jupe et chapeau bleu marine, chaussures sport marron. Adresser toutes indications à M. et Mme Bruder, 41 boulevard Ornano, Paris" (*DB* 7). This announcement captured Modiano's attention and inspired him to write *Voyage de noces* two years later. Through the telling of the fictional story of Ingrid Teyrsen, Modiano allowed himself to explore the possibilities of retracing a (virtual) stranger's past. However, his imaginings did not sufficiently exorcise his obsession with the individual Dora Bruder. When Modiano eventually wrote *Dora Bruder* in 1999, he explained "je n'ai cessé d'y penser durant des mois et des mois.... Il me semblait que je ne parviendrais jamais à retrouver la moindre trace de Dora Bruder. Alors le manque que j'éprouvais m'a poussé à l'écriture d'un roman, *Voyage de noces*..." (*DB* 53). Modiano wrote *Voyage de noces* as a means of continuing his concentration on what little information had been provided in the announcement on Dora (*DB* 53) because, at the time, he did not believe it possible to reconstruct the life of a total stranger from the past: "Ils s'imaginent, dans leurs articles nécrologiques, pouvoir retracer le cours d'une vie. Mais ils ne savent rien" (*VN* 21).

In writing *Voyage de noces*, Modiano could, as we have seen, invent the details of the life of someone like Dora Bruder. By situating the fictional story of Ingrid in the same historical period as when the real Dora lived, Modiano was able to recapture the aura of

fear, emptiness, and despair that Dora faced. His purpose in writing the novel *Voyage de noces* was not to provide a detailed description of Dora's life since he did not in fact know any details about Dora other than what he read in the announcement. Modiano sought instead to recapture the aura of the Occupation by creating an imaginary tale of a girl who shared Dora's world and who endured the emotional trauma of that period. The quest for Ingrid was created, as Hueston and Nettlebeck describe it, "en touches légères, filtrant les débris de l'Histoire pour n'en retenir que les parfums et la lumière."[37]

However, even after completing *Voyage de noces,* the one aspect concerning Dora Bruder that continued to haunt Modiano was in fact "l'extrême précision de quelques détails" (*DB* 53). The details of a person's life distinguish one person from another. Even when one person is held as representative of a group, that person, in addition to each individual in that group, still retains her or his own unique story. Modiano is haunted by the fact that Dora Bruder's story, like countless others, has been hidden, forgotten, or perhaps even irrevocably lost. Although Modiano alludes in *Voyage de noces* that one cannot retrace the course of an individual's life according to a bit of information contained in a brief announcement, this is precisely what he seeks to do in *Dora Bruder.* From the few lines read about a missing girl in a newspaper dating back to 1941, Modiano embarks on a quest to retrace her life. Modiano thus makes the leap from a completely fictionalized novel *Voyage de noces* to the partially fictionalized tale or "récit," as he calls it, *Dora Bruder*. This progression from novel to "récit" allows Modiano to form a bond not only between himself as the narrator and Dora, but also between the reader and Dora, which results in a profoundly intimate story linking the past to the present.

When Modiano writes *Dora Bruder,* he continues in first-person narration but dispenses with an intermediary narrator, which is the role played by Jean in *Voyage de noces*. Modiano reduces the distance separating the author from the narrator and his subject by appropriating the role of narrator himself. Yet, instead of a narrator who is himself a character in the story, the "je" in *Dora Bruder* - whom we are told is Modiano's voice - plays the role of witness, researcher and recorder, providing a reliable biographer, but one whose role is secondary in comparison to the importance of his subject.[38] No longer needing to fabricate every detail in Dora's life through the imaginings of a fictional narrator, Modiano tells the story of the actual quest he undertook to uncover the traces of Dora's existence. However, because he refers back in time to various stages in his quest and to memories from his personal life, he maintains a certain distance from Dora similar to that between her and us as the readers. Nevertheless, since Modiano de-emphasizes the fictitiousness of the text and calls *Dora Bruder* a "récit", not a novel, we will refer to the narrator in *Dora Bruder* as Modiano himself.

In the discussion of *Voyage de noces* in the second chapter, we revealed that although Jean's remembrances of Ingrid are essentially episodic, these memories are intimately tied to the tangible reminders of her existence, such as the places where she lived and the photos, papers, and other objects she and Rigaud left behind. Additionally, Jean's memories of Ingrid trigger the recollection of episodic memories from his own past, which in turn provide Jean with insight into his own as well as Ingrid's situation. The essential difference between this text and the tale of Dora Bruder, however, lies in the respective relationships between the narrators and the girls they seek. Whereas Jean had recourse to personal memories of Ingrid and the time they actually spent together,

Modiano never met Dora Bruder. His "memories" of her therefore must first be created in order for him to actually "remember" her. In order for him to form "memories" of Dora, he must seek out traces of her existence, which are the tangible documents that provide specific details about her life and clues as to the places she frequented. This chapter will discuss the process by which Modiano, through his quest to uncover the details of Dora's life, begins to form an intimate bond with her by means of the episodic memories from his own past that surface during his search; it will likewise discuss the role that *lieux de mémoire* play in the evocation of episodic memories.

As we explained in the second chapter, episodic memories hold the most meaning and value for a person's life. Since Modiano has no memories of Dora Bruder, he must find a way to unleash episodic memories in a manner that will relate his existence to hers. While records and other paper documents provide factual details of Dora's life, such as her birth date, date of enrollment in boarding school, date of arrest, etc., these details in and of themselves do not provide a profound enough impact to cause Modiano to form a personal connection to Dora. These facts do however reveal the names of places where Dora lived or frequented during her life. By visiting these places, or *lieux de mémoire* as they will become for Modiano, the narrator can visualize Dora's home and attempt to visualize her experiences as well. When he visits the specific buildings where events in Dora's life occurred, he can imagine how she might have felt and speculate about the details. With the aid of these *lieux de mémoire*, Modiano can associate the facts he learned from various documents with the picture of the places where events occurred in his mind. Having a visual memory of a place or person assists in fostering an episodic memory. Additionally, the narrator Modiano is intimately familiar with the area of Paris

where Dora Bruder lived as a child, since he too spent some time in that same neighborhood as a teenager. As a result, during his quest to uncover traces of Dora's existence, Modiano also recalls episodic memories from his past when he lived in this area.

In this chapter, we will begin our analysis of *Dora Bruder* by examining the role of tangible traces and *lieux de mémoire,* which are inseparably linked to episodic memories in Modiano's work, and the greater sense of importance that he invests in them. Since Dora Bruder was a real person, the tale involves accounts of Modiano's real-life investigation of her and the facts that he uncovered. However, it is not limited to the details of his investigation, which incidentally lasted nearly ten years. He includes in his tale episodic memories from his own past, historical facts from both his and Dora's pasts, and additional discoveries he makes concerning other victims of the second World War. We will investigate the role of the episodic memories and the additional information Modiano discovers while looking for traces of Dora that provides evidence of countless others who endured similar experiences of fear, loss, and despair. Through a comparison of this text with *Voyage de noces*, we will also examine the deepening progression of Modiano's quest to uncover the pasts of those who are gone and how he connects his quest to the estrangement that contemporary individuals experience when considering the past. We will then be able to demonstrate the importance of connecting to strangers from the past, the role that an individual can play as being emblematic of a society, and the relationship between the individual and the collective. In the process, we will discover how to relate not only to individuals from the past but also how to relate events in the present to those from the past so that we may learn from the past and be able to better

relate to both the present and the future.

The importance of tangible traces is emphasized at the outset of *Dora Bruder.* While *Voyage de noces* ends with the missing persons add for Ingrid, in *Dora Bruder,* the add serves as the starting point and catalyst for the narrator's quest. In *Voyage,* Jean had been personally acquainted with Ingrid and could therefore use his own memories as a starting point from which to remember and retrace her life. The missing persons add is simply a tangible trace to be considered in piecing together her past and connecting the memories he has from the details that Ingrid and Rigaud gave him. Even the obituary, which shocks Jean into remembering Ingrid but does not inspire him to begin his quest immediately, serves as a peripheral piece of evidence.

In *Dora Bruder,* however, the importance of written records is accentuated from the beginning by the fact that the missing persons add is presented in the first paragraph and serves as the sole catalyst for Modiano's quest. Since Modiano has no memories of the girl he seeks, he must begin his search for the only traces of Dora that exist in the present. Therefore, he invests both paper traces and sites with a greater sense of importance. Although very few paper traces of Dora remain, they nevertheless provide the necessary links in Modiano's quest that lead him to the *lieux de mémoire* that allow him to form a physical contact with her. Hence, Modiano begins with the address provided in the add: 41 boulevard Ornano, Paris (*DB* 7). The address provides not only a tangible *lieu de mémoire* that the narrator can visit to seek traces of Dora's existence, but it is also located in a neighborhood that is familiar to him. This area is in fact a *lieu de mémoire* from Modiano's own childhood. Consequently, Modiano invests both types of tangible traces with a greater sense of urgency in *Dora Bruder* than he does in *Voyage de*

noces and emphasizes the necessity of preserving them.

While these tangible proofs of historical "reality" confirm Dora's existence and are used to retrieve the traces of her life, it is also important to note that Modiano had previously revealed the fallibility of the tangible trace, specifically in regard to written records, in *Voyage de noces.* In this text, the narrator found that in Ingrid's obituary, they had recorded her age incorrectly, which was actually 45 at the time of her death, and used her maiden name instead of her married one (*VN* 21). Jean wondered, however, how he could reproach them, for "qui le savait, à part Rigaud, moi et les préposés de l'état civil?" (*VN* 21). The fact that the narrator in *Voyage de noces* has privileged information regarding Ingrid contrasts with the distance that later separates the narrator in *Dora Bruder* from Dora. In the latter text, the narrator (Modiano) has only second-hand information from which to reconstruct Dora's life.

Dora Bruder is based then on real knowledge but distorted by time as well as by the fallibility of traces. As a result, Modiano can never be truly certain that what he finds is completely accurate. Therefore, he can imagine what might have happened with some degree of certainty that his imagination is in accordance with the traces he discovered and render a plausible, if not accurate, account of her life. While Alan Morris, author of a broadly framed study of Patrick Modiano, voices concern over this merging of worlds - "Reconstruction through knowledge? Or reconstruction through fantasy? Typically, we are never entirely sure where we stand" (*PM* 171) - the fact that historical records can contain errors lends more credibility to the narrator's speculations and affords the author a greater range of creativity with respect to the details of Dora's life. He possesses no privileged information, only that which the reader would likewise find, were he or she to

enact the same quest. The narrator does, however, know something that perhaps we as readers do not, and which ties him more closely to Dora. He is, as we have noted, very familiar with the neighborhood where Dora lived and can draw upon this knowledge in the course of his quest.

As the narrator visits the Ornano area of Paris, acquires more and more information about Dora, and learns the history of some of the buildings, he begins to regard his former childhood neighborhood with a fresh eye. In his work entitled *The Art of Memory,* Jacques Mailhos declares that "the basic principle of the art of memory is to constantly establish links between the concrete (memory images or objects...) and the abstract, i.e. the "story," or narrative development of the image" (*AOM* 160-61). Knowing the historical background of a site permits an individual to more vividly imagine events from the past and create a picture, or "memory", of them in his or her mind, while likewise investing that particular site with more meaning. The narrator of *Dora Bruder* remembers events, people and buildings from his childhood that, at the time, held little or no meaning for him, but which in retrospect gain new importance. He remembers visiting the flea market every Saturday or Sunday afternoon where a Polish Jew selling luggage once offered him a cigarette. Although the age of the person indicated is not supplied, it is very possible that this man was either born sometime close to or during the second World War or perhaps even lived through it. The narrator Modiano also recalls the cinema located at 43 Ornano Blvd., but now realizes that "l'immeuble du 41, précédant le cinéma, n'avait jamais attiré mon attention, et pourtant je suis passé devant lui pendant des mois, des années. De 1965 à 1968. Adresser toutes indications à M. et Mme Bruder, 41 boulevard Ornano, Paris" (*DB* 9). When he returns to

the same cinema in May 1996, it no longer exists; it has been replaced by a store. The building where Dora lived, however, still stands. This building located at 41 boulevard Ornano, he learns, was a hotel at the time when Dora and her parents were already living there in 1937 and 1938 (*DB* 13). He imagines now that when he was in the Ornano area as a child, "peut-être, sans que j'en éprouve encore une claire conscience, étais-je sur la trace de Dora Bruder et de ses parents. Ils étaient là, déjà, en filigrane" (*DB* 11).

Throughout his quest, the narrator pours through multitudes of documents in search of the slightest mention of Dora Bruder. He then attempts to link these bits of information to the various buildings with which these events are associated. These *lieux de mémoire* represent the tangible remains anchoring these abstract facts to reality. Without these sites, the narrator would find it much more difficult, if not nearly impossible, to imagine events from Dora's past. This shift in importance of *lieux de mémoire* from *Voyage de noces* to *Dora Bruder* can be seen by comparing the two texts. In *Voyage de noces*, Jean visits only two hotel rooms previously inhabited by Ingrid and attempts to retrace her life more from his own memories of her and the information she provided; these sites are important only as memory prompters. The greater emphasis that Modiano will place on *lieux de mémoire* in the text of *Dora Bruder* is actually hinted at in the end of *Voyage de noces* when Jean at last glides through the streets of Paris on his borrowed bicycle and arrives in Ingrid's old neighborhood. In *Dora Bruder,* the buildings are more essential because Modiano has no personal memories of Dora and relies on these sites to imagine Dora's experiences and to create memories of her.

Through the course of his investigation, Modiano encounters much difficulty in retrieving traces of Dora's existence and finds that many of the *lieux de mémoire* he seeks

have been erased. The disappearance of these places creates voids in his search that no paper trace can replace, for they do not retain the spirit of those who have disappeared. However, it is precisely the absence of these places that Modiano senses, and this feeling of emptiness is itself invested with importance. Modiano addresses the apparent paradox of these erased *lieux de mémoire*, which nevertheless represent traces of Dora because of the hollows or "creux" created by their absence, when he writes "on se dit qu'au moins les lieux gardent une légère empreinte des personnes qui les ont habités. Empreinte: marque en creux ou en relief. Pour Ernest et Cécile Bruder, pour Dora, je dirai : en creux. J'ai ressenti une impression d'absence et de vide, chaque fois que je me suis trouvé dans un endroit où ils avaient vécu" (*DB* 28-29). As Modiano searches for information about Dora Bruder, he experiences various feelings of emptiness, both where buildings have been destroyed or replaced and also around buildings from Dora's time period that still exist. These feelings of "creux" paradoxically serve to further accentuate Dora's loss, for they create in Modiano a feeling of emptiness that nevertheless gives the impression of being full. Modiano's purpose in writing about his quest is in fact the compulsion to create in us as readers this same feeling as he visits the places of both existing and either transformed or erased *lieux de mémoire*, such as the hotel on Polonceau Street where the Bruder family had lived prior to living in the one on the Ornano Boulevard.

At the beginning of his quest, the only *lieu de mémoire* that Modiano knows for certain Dora frequented is the hotel at 41 boulevard Ornano, whose name Modiano is never able to discover. Since this building has been transformed into an apartment complex, Modiano decides to seek Dora's traces by finding the school she might have attended in the neighborhood. He writes to each of the primary schools located in her

neighborhood: 8 rue Ferdinand-Flocon, 20 rue Hermel, 7 rue Championnet, and 61 rue de Clignancourt. After writing to each school, he receives a message from each stating that her name is not listed on any of the registers dated prior to the war. Although the director of the former girls school at 69 rue Championnet invites the narrator to consult the school registers himself, the narrator hesitates to do so for fear that her name will not be found on any of them. He clings to hope against the seemingly overwhelming impossibility of ever finding the traces of this girl from the past.

Frustrated in his efforts at locating an existing site other than the apartment complex on the Ornano Boulevard where Dora had lived or spent time, Modiano searches for other tangible traces of Dora's existence that might indicate other buildings and places through which she passed. Although he begins by searching for Dora's birth certificate, he informs us as the readers that his search lasted for four years. He tells the story of the end of his search when he eventually discovers her date of birth to be 25 February 1926, although her place of birth, the XII^{e} arrondissement of Paris, remains unknown to him for another two years. During his search for Dora's birth certificate, Modiano undergoes an unnerving experience at the city hall in the XII^{e} arrondissement. When he is denied access to information on Dora's birth certificate because he is not related to her, he wonders "un moment, j'ai pensé qu'il était l'une de ces sentinelles de l'oubli chargées de garder un secret honteux, et d'interdire à ceux qui le voulaient de retrouver la moindre trace de l'existence de quelqu'un" (*DB* 16). This feeling of a shameful secret is reinforced when he next visits the law courts to ask for an exemption from this legal detail and is confronted with a metal detector. He recalls imagining how prisoners must feel: "fallait-il aussi que je lui donne, comme à l'entrée d'une prison, mes

lacets, ma ceinture, mon portefeuille ?" (*DB* 17). Like some of the sites that have been demolished, Modiano discovers that other tangible evidence of the war has been erased, ignored, forgotten or, in this case, locked away to prevent its being found. Modiano never discovers, for instance, where Dora spent her time as a runaway. He also never finds the papers documenting Dora's or her father's arrests because the police archives were destroyed after the war, such as the special registers opened in June 1942, "la semaine où ceux qui avaient été classés dans la catégorie 'juifs' ont reçu leurs trois étoiles jaunes par personne, à partir de l'âge de six ans" (*DB* 76).

While searching for information on Dora's birth date, Modiano also relives the experience of what appeared to be at the time an endless search for a stairway that was supposedly located at the end of a hallway. Upon reaching the end, though, the narrator entered "une salle déserte" as he described it with no stairwell in sight. He writes, "j'étais pris de cette panique que l'on ressent dans les mauvais rêves" (*DB* 17). This disconcerting experience triggers the remembrance of another episodic memory from Modiano's own past, which occurred twenty years ago, when he unexpectedly decided to visit his father in the hospital of la Pitié-Salpêtrière:

> Je me souviens d'avoir erré pendant des heures à travers l'immensité de cet hôpital, à sa recherche... je questionnais des infirmières qui me donnaient des renseignements contradictoires. Je finissais par douter de l'existence de mon père en passant et repassant devant cette église majestueuse et ces corps de bâtiment irréels, intacts depuis le XVIII^{e} siècle et qui m'évoquaient Manon Lescaut et l'époque où ce lieu servait de prison aux filles, sous le nom sinistre d'Hôpital Général, avant qu'on les déporte en Louisiane (*DB* 17-18).

Not only does the narrator recall personal experiences from his past while searching for information on Dora's past, he is also reminded of literary texts he had studied -- adding yet another dimension to his present quest.

Modiano's use of the word "déserte" and his feeling of being in a dream echo two of the prevailing themes in *Voyage de noces* where Jean makes consistent references to Milan as a hot city full of deserted streets lit by a glaring sun. Throughout the text, the narrator reinforces both the oppressiveness of the sun and the connection he has made between the summer and Ingrid's death. The emphasis on heat, sunlight, and summertime is replaced in *Dora Bruder* by cold, shadow, and wintertime. Modiano's continual references to shadows mark a striking contrast between *Voyage de noces*, in which the narrator does eventually uncover the answers he seeks, and *Dora Bruder*, where Dora's past and that of countless other victims of the Occupation will forever remain in shadow, never to be known.

Just as Jean in his reminiscences says that he no longer distinguishes one summer from another, Modiano confesses a similar sentiment as he attempts to imagine his life in relation to Dora's: "Avec le recul des années, les perspectives se brouillent pour moi, les hivers se mêlent l'un à l'autre. Celui de 1965 et celui de 1942" (*DB* 10). However, although the sun and heat, which are so important in *Voyage de noces,* are replaced with shadow in *Dora Bruder,* both are symbolic. The sun in *Voyage de noces* represents the unrelenting truth behind Ingrid's suicide and that Jean seeks. When sunlight appears in *Dora Bruder,* it emphasizes the bleakness of an ugly truth that has been hidden in shadow since the end of the second World War. The shadow plays a dual role, however, for as we shall see, it also protects Dora during her times as a runaway and allows Dora to keep, as Modiano calls it, the secret of her experiences when she first ran away.

Modiano stresses the role of shadow in his arduous search for traces when he writes "il faut longtemps pour que resurgisse à la lumière ce qui a été effacé" (*DB* 13).

This statement refers not only to the difficult task of uncovering Dora's traces, it also applies to the false sense of safety that is associated with various buildings. This occurs in *Voyage de noces* while Rigaud and Ingrid are living for a time in Juan-les-Pins as if the war were something of the past until one day, Rigaud notices "une tache sombre" (*VN* 62) who "ne s'expose jamais au soleil" (*VN* 63). This dark Gestapo agent who seems to always hide in the shadows represents the lurking danger that hides from the light of truth. Similarly, in *Dora Bruder,* certain buildings during the Occupation appeared to represent assistance and safety but were in reality misused and exploited. The Rothschild Hospital where Dora was born, for example, represented a false refuge for the many Jewish immigrants who sought safety there. However, the Rothschild Hospital itself became a center for roundups beginning in the summer of 1942, which thus transformed this place of refuge into a prison. Later in the war, many of those interned at Drancy were sent to this hospital when ill only to be later returned to the transit camp and deported to the extermination camps in Poland.

Another false safety net that Modiano stresses in *Dora Bruder* concerns the belief that being a French citizen would save an individual from being arrested and deported. Modiano devotes an entire chapter to the letters he found that were sent by distressed French Jews enquiring after disappeared relatives to the Préfecture de police de l'Occupation, which still stands on the banks of the Seine. Each stresses the French nationality of the victims in a vain attempt to emphasize the legal equality of French Jewish and non-Jewish citizens. For example, one letter reads "Je sollicite de votre bienveillance la libération de mon petit-fils Midhaël Rubin, 3 ans, français, de mère française, interné à Drancy avec sa mère..." (*DB* 85). These letters show the

ineffectiveness and weakness of the French government in protecting her citizens while offering them only the false impression of safety under the Vichy régime.

A false safety net that Dora's parents sought took the form of the boarding school in which they enrolled her at the age of fourteen on 9 May 1940. Modiano discovers this after consulting the registers at the schools in Dora's neighborhood whose addresses he had previously listed. At last, he arrives at the religious boarding school of Saint-Coeur-de-Marie on the rue de Picpus of the XII^{e} arrondissement. Unfortunately, though, the old buildings of Dora's era have been replaced by more recent ones that "laissent supposer que le pensionnat occupait un vaste terrain" (*DB* 40). Nevertheless, while consulting the school's registers, he discovers not only the date of her enrollment but also the date of her disappearance: "14 décembre 1941 Suite de fugue" (*DB* 36).

The narrator wonders as to the reasons for her enrollment in the boarding school and why she ran away, but never finds definitive answers to these questions. He speculates that according to the personality traits provided by the Bruder's niece, Dora's independent and rebellious nature might have prompted her parents to seek a more disciplined environment for her. He wonders as well about the time she spent at Saint-Coeur-de-Marie, but since he has not yet found any of her classmates, he is reduced to suppositions. Since he imagines that life in the school was most likely harsh, it is not surprising to the narrator that the independently minded Dora would not enjoy her stay there. However, he feels certain that one of her classmates must still exist somewhere in Paris, and therefore, "en écrivant ce livre, je lance des appels, comme des signaux de phare dont je doute malheureusement qu'ils puissent éclairer la nuit. Mais j'espère toujours" (42). Although the narrator knows that Dora spent time in Saint-Coeur-de-

Marie, he does not know what life was like for her in this place, how she experienced it, and as with many other details about her life, this period also will remain one of the "creux" that haunt him.

As the narrator recalls the neighborhood where Dora lived and where she attended boarding school, he is reminded of yet another time in his own life, twenty-five years earlier in June 1971, when he was strolling through these same streets. He recalls a strange sensation he felt on that particular afternoon: "sans savoir pourquoi, j'avais l'impression de marcher sur les traces de quelqu'un" (*DB* 49). Walking in the shadows of the very buildings that Dora had frequented helps to create a powerful bond between past and present. The narrator can imagine her presence, view the area from her perspective, and thereby attempt to capture some sense of the past.

From a newspaper dated 2 octobre 1940, the narrator reads the name Ernest Bruder in the publication of the ordinance for mandatory registration of all Jews at their local police station. Once again, Dora's parents attempt to protect her by not registering Dora as a Jew. When Ernest Bruder registered himself and his wife, whose names were filed under the Jewish folder number 49091, he did not declare his daughter. The narrator imagines that Dora might have escaped the police completely had she remained hidden in the boarding school. She might have escaped the mass raids of both women and children that began in the summer of 1942 and continued for two years just a few feet from the buildings of Saint-Coeur-de-Marie at the Rothschild Hospital where Dora was born. In fact, as the narrator recalls, Jean Valjean in Hugo's *Les Misérables* successfully escaped the police by hiding in a garden situated at 62 rue de la Picpus, precisely the address of Saint-Coeur-de-Marie. However, Dora did not remain within the safety of the school but

rather struck out on her own in December of 1941. When Modiano finds the missing persons add Dora's father registered with the police, it is dated thirteen days following the day of Dora's disappearance on 27 December 1941. Unfortunately, Ernest Bruder had no choice but to seek help from the police, the same people from whom he had attempted to hide his daughter's existence when he neglected to register her nearly two years earlier. As a result, "en essayant de la retrouver, il attirait l'attention sur elle" (*DB* 76).

The police station, which also ostensibly represented a source of assistance, was another false safety net. When Modiano discovers that Dora's father was arrested and interned at Drancy on 19 March 1942, he reads the word "recherché" next to the name Ernest Bruder. He wonders for how long Ernest had been sought after and if, the day when he went to ask for help in finding Dora at the police station, he had unwittingly brought attention to himself as well as to Dora. Modiano never discovers the exact circumstances surrounding the arrest, and muses regretfully that "ceux-là même qui sont chargés de vous chercher et de vous retrouver établissent des fiches pour mieux vous faire disparaître ensuite -- définitivement" (*DB* 82). Although the records of the arrests have been destroyed, the building of the Occupation Police Headquarters, to which countless letters were addressed during the Occupation requesting the release of loved ones who had been arrested, still exists and has not changed much since the 1940s. Much like the signs to Drancy, Romainville, and Duremond that still stand today even though "on a construit une autoroute, rasé des pavillons, boulversé le paysage de cette banlieue nord-est pour la rendre, comme l'ancien îlot 16, aussi neutre et grise que possible" (*DB* 141-42), this evidence of the past still remains.

The imagery of shadow and cold emptiness is further reinforced by the

circumstances of Dora's escape, which occurred during the coldest month of what was also perhaps "la période la plus noire, la plus étouffante que Paris ait connue depuis le début de l'Occupation" (*DB* 55). During this month, the curfew began at six in the evening. Other sinister events had occurred earlier in the month when a raid on the 12th of December captured 700 French Jews and was followed three days later by a fine of a million francs imposed on the Jews, in addition to the killing of 70 hostages at Mount Valérien the same day. With the curfew, "autour du pensionnat du Saint-Coeur-de-Marie, la ville devenait une prison obscure dont les quartiers s'éteignaient les uns après les autres" (*DB* 56), and Dora had to make the attempt to escape regardless of the possible consequences.

Dora's choice to run away constitutes perhaps the most crucial link in Modiano's connection to her. The narrator writes "voilà le seul moment du livre où, sans le savoir, je me suis rapproché d'elle, dans l'espace et le temps" (*DB* 54). He poses the question "qu'est-ce qui nous décide à faire une fugue?" As a young boy, he too had run away one winter evening, 18 January 1960, "à une époque qui n'avait pas la noiceur de décembre 1941" (*DB* 57). Dora's escape could not have been as simple as his own, for "tout lui était hostile" (*DB* 78) in her world of police, Gestapo agents, and curfews, but they both felt the cold "qui vous rend encore plus vive la solitude et vous fait sentir encore plus fort qu'un étau se resserre" (*DB* 57). It is also important to note that the only means he has of keeping track of Dora during this time is to describe the changes in weather and the harshness of the cold.

In reflecting on Dora's escape in relation to his own, the narrator likewise recalls the profound sensation of freedom he had felt when he ran away:

> Je me souviens de l'impression forte que j'ai éprouvée lors de ma fugue de janvier 1960... C'était l'ivresse de trancher, d'un seul coup, tous les liens: rupture brutale et volontaire avec la discipline qu'on vous impose... Désormais, vous n'aurez plus rien à faire avec ces gens-là ; rupture avec vos parents qui n'ont pas su vous aimer et dont vous vous dites qu'il n'y a aucun recours à espérer d'eux; sentiment de révolte et de solitude porté à son incandescence et qui vous coupe le souffle et vous met en état d'apesanteur. Sans doute l'une des rares occasions de ma vie où j'ai été vraiment moi-même et où j'ai marché à mon pas (*DB* 77-8).

The severing away of all ties makes one feel free, as if time has stopped, but this feeling of release does not last long because "cette extase" has no future and "vous êtes très vite brisé net dans votre élan" (*DB* 78). Running away then is for Modiano a cry for help and sometimes even a form of suicide, as in the case of Jean and Ingrid in *Voyage de noces*. It is also important to note that he makes reference here to the danger inherent in breaking with the past. It is often worse to suppress the past than to face it and deal with it because, in the end, you cannot run and hide forever. Just as Modiano is discovering truths about the lives of victims of the Occupation while searching for information on Dora's life, which the Gestapo had tried to eliminate or hide, so must we as readers also realize that the past is an inseparable part of an individual's life for which each person is responsible.

After learning of Dora's first escape from the boarding school, the narrator says "longtemps, ne n'ai rien su de Dora Bruder après sa fugue du 14 décembre et l'avis de recherche qui avait été publié dans *Paris-Soir*" (*DB* 60). Then he discovers that Dora had been interned at the concentration camp of Drancy eight months after the day she ran away from the boarding school. The scrap of paper he finds indicates that Dora had been transferred from the facility at Tourelles on 13 August 1942 along with 300 other Jewish prisoners. Modiano knows from history that the Tourelles camp was set up on the premises of an old colonial infantry barracks and opened in October 1940 to handle

foreign Jews in an "irregular" situation. However, he is unable to uncover any trace of Dora's relationship to this camp or the reasons for which she was sent there in the first place. At last, he admits "j'en étais réduit aux suppositions" (*DB* 61).

As indicated earlier, the winter of her escape from Saint-Coeur-Marie in 1941-42 "était le plus ténébreux et le plus dur de l'Occupation" (*DB* 61). He imagines that agents must have arrested her in February because he recalls reading in a book of Memoirs that young girls from age sixteen to nineteen had been sent to the Tourelles camp for minor offences against German regulations, which had been put into force during this month. He wonders if perhaps Dora was arrested when his own father was taken into police custody. An episodic memory of his father calls to mind "ce mois de février, le soir de l'entrée en vigueur de l'ordonnance allemande, [quand] mon père avait été pris dans une rafle, aux Champs-Elysées" (*DB* 62). Modiano's father was not carrying any identification when the Jewish Affairs Police trapped him in a restaurant one night. While in the police van, his father had seen a young girl of about eighteen years old. Until now, Modiano had practically forgotten about her but wonders in retrospect if she might have in fact been Dora. Like Dora, his father had not been registered as a Jew -- "ainsi n'avait-il plus aucune existence légale" (*DB* 63). However, Modiano also reflects upon the differences between his father and Dora, mostly that "il n'y avait pas beaucoup de recours pour une fille de seize ans, livrée à elle-même, dans Paris, l'hiver 42,... dans une situation doublement irrégulière : à la fois juive et mineure en cavale" (*DB* 64). For his adult father, at age thirty, "la voie était toute tracée" (*DB* 64) because "on avait fait de lui un hors-la-loi," a status from which he would profit by disappearing in the quagmire of the Black Market.

After researching the possibility that the girl who was arrested with his father might have been Dora, Modiano decides that this young girl could not have been she because neither the names nor the ages matched those who were entered on the camp registers from 18 and 19 February 1942. He then surmises that she might have escaped in the changing of cars at the station where women were sent to Tourelles and the men to Drancy, similar to Modiano's father who escaped when the timer in the stairwell switched off the lights as he was being sent to the police station. Since the Jewish Affairs authorities had destroyed all of their files, Modiano has no historical documents by which to verify facts, only suppositions. He says that "je crois qu'elle demeurera toujours anonyme, elle et les autres ombres arrêtées cette nuit-là... Si je n'étais pas là pour l'écrire, il n'y aurait plus aucune trace de la présence de cette inconnue et de celle de mon père dans un panier à salade en février 1942...Rien que des personnes... dans la catégorie des 'individus non identifiés'" (*DB* 65). Modiano insists here on the need to remember the past and on the importance of his own task in relation both to Dora and to us as readers of her tale.

Modiano later learns that indeed Dora was actually not arrested in February. In the archives of the Clignancourt police precinct, he finds under the date of 17 April 1942 that Dora Bruder "a réintégré le domicile maternel" (*DB* 87). Next to her entry are figures - 2098 15/24 - that Modiano does not understand, and her name is followed by other "affaires" (*DB* 88) - lost dogs, prostitutes, abandoned children, and other adolescents who had disappeared - where "il n'y est jamais question de 'juifs'" (*DB* 88). At this point, then, it seems that Dora had not yet been singled out as a Jew. A few months following this incident, Modiano learns of a second time that Dora ran away when a friend finds a

document in the archives of the Yivo Institute in New York dated 17 June 1942, stating that Dora Bruder had been returned to her mother two days earlier on 15 June, indicating that she was still considered to have been simply another runaway, not a Jew. While continuing to ponder the circumstances of Dora's arrest, Modiano recalls that twenty years after his father's arrest, he had found himself in the vicinity of the building for the Police on Jewish Affairs where his father had been taken. While waiting for his mother who was acting in a theater piece, Modiano had visited this area of Paris where his father had been arrested but did not realize that "je revenais dans une zone qui avait été un trou noir" (*DB* 65). Modiano remembers his father telling him about Commissioner Schweblin to whom he had been led. Schweblin would nominate certain police officers, eight in all and always the same eight, to carry out the body searches of those to be sent to Auschwitz from the camps of Drancy and Pithiviers. During these searches, the prisoners were often beaten, their pockets often ripped off, and they were often forced to strip. He says, "je ne parlerai pas de la fouille des femmes effectuée en des endroits intimes" (*DB* 66). Once more, of all of these investigations and the goods stolen, "aucune trace ne subsiste" (*DB* 67). The names of the eight officers were never discovered and Schweblin supposedly disappeared in 1943. However, when his father told the story of his experience in the commissioner's office, he said that he had recognized the man in Paris one day after the war. This memory reminds Modiano of the extent of the Gestapo's efforts in hiding their sinister activities both during and after the war. It also reveals that because no paper records or tangible evidence remained, those who were responsible for committing crimes were never held accountable for them and continued to live without penalty after the war.

Remembering his father's arrest and experience in the police van brings to mind the episodic memory of the time that Modiano himself was placed in one together with his father. Like Dora, he was a minor at the time, only eighteen, and was arrested while attempting to obtain the child support payment his father owed his mother. He says "je n'en parlerai pas maintenant si cette péripétie n'avait pris pour moi un caractère symbolique" (*DB* 68). He recalled in the van that this was an experience his father had already had during the winter of 1942, and envied for a moment a group of people seated on a sunlit terrace as they drove past, but says "je ne risquais pas grand-chose : nous étions heureusement dans une époque anodine, inoffensive" (*DB* 70). However, his father's indifference to the situation astounded Modiano. He neither acknowledged his son's presence nor exhibited any compassion for his son's apprehension about facing the police, even after what he had endured during the Occupation. Since Modiano was at that time writing his first book about his father's experiences during the Occupation, his father's indifference seemed even more unjust. When they arrived at Police headquarters, his father did not even claim Modiano as his son but called him "un voyou" who had been menacing him for a year (*DB* 71), to which the police commissioner threatened that the next time, Modiano would be held in custody.

From this experience Modiano learns the difficulty for someone from the present, and even for someone who has experienced the horrors of the past, to relate to that past. Modiano cannot comprehend his father's indifference his arrest, since his father had himself been arrested and mistreated by the police during the Occupation. This incident also reveals *how* a person can put his past experiences aside and continue to live in the present by suppressing the past. His father knows that he is no longer living during the

time of the Occupation and that things have drastically changed since that time. Consequently, he shows no fear for his current situation, but he likewise has no compassion for the plight of his son.

Although Modiano's experience with the police in the early 1960s was non-threatening, Dora's turned out to be fatal. As Modiano traverses the streets of Dora's neighborhood, he closes his eyes in an attempt to imagine Dora and her mother walking from the police station to their rooms in the Ornano hotel. He imagines the vulnerability and anguish of her mother, faced with a rebellious daughter and a husband who had been arrested, and her despair soon after on 19 June 1942 when Dora was again arrested and sent to the Tourelles internment center. In searching the registers of the Tourelles camp, Modiano discovers that Dora had been given the number 439, and also learns the definitive date of her transfer to the anteroom of Auschwitz: "Drancy le 13/8/42" (*DB* 112).

Based on the historical records Modiano is able to amass, he describes a probable scenario of the day that Dora arrived at the Tourelles camp in order to better imagine how she felt. It is at this point that Modiano begins to emphasize Dora's plight as a collective experience. From the information he gathers on Dora, Modiano speculates about the experiences she shared with other victims of the Occupation. Consequently, Dora, like the narrator, serves as an intermediary between herself and all of those who were arrested, deported, and killed during the Occupation. In reading the narrator's version of Dora's experience, we as readers are better able to picture the events of that day and also learn from Modiano's search. Those women who were transported to Drancy three days later on 22 June formed, along with over 900 men, "le premier convoi qui partait de

France avec des femmes" (*DB* 115). Modiano stresses the omnipresent danger and fearful climate in which Dora struggled during this time when he writes: "Dora a vécu ce climat oppressant. Le matin du lundi, quand il faisait encore nuit, elle a vu par les fenêtres fermées, comme toutes ses camarades d'internement, partir les soixante-six femmes" (*DB* 115). Modiano's imaginings about the Tourelles camp experiences emphasize the fear and helplessness that Dora must have experienced as she witnessed the deportation of so many women around her and sensed the inevitability of her own fate.

When Dora herself arrived at Drancy on 13 August 1942, she shared a convoy with 300 other Jews from the Tourelles camp, and Modiano deliberately names some of the women who had crossed Dora's path: Claudette Bloch (one of the few survivors), Tamara Isserlis, Ida Levine, Hena, and another young Jewish woman, Annette Zelman, who was engaged to marry a non-Jew named Jean Jausion. Annette was arrested because her fiancé's parents did not approve of the union. Similar to the letters mentioned earlier, not only did the French government not protect its citizens, but the French citizens themselves also betrayed one another. By contrast, Modiano gives another example of his findings that reveals the courage of the victims, such as those who, as friends of the Jews, would wear the yellow star to demonstrate their solidarity. They were all arrested and sent to Drancy. Before writing *Dora Bruder*, Modiano chanced to find a letter that was written from Drancy by a man named Robert Tartakovsky, who had shared the convoy sent to the camp on 22 June 1942 with Dora and the other women. The person to whom it was written was unknown, there were no known surviving relatives, and so the letter was sold. Modiano recopies this letter, which goes on for five and a half pages, to show the courage of this man who thought to spare his mother's feelings and hold onto the hope

that he would soon be freed. All of these letters demonstrate the complexity of the Occupation period and the divergent reactions of the population, some of whom sought to profit from the situation at the expense of others while other individuals sought to support their friends and family at the cost of their own lives.

Although Modiano does not know the specifics about Dora's transfer to Drancy, he legitimately surmises that someone at Tourelles gave the order, which then had to be signed by another official, and he wonders, "Au moment de signer, ce fonctionnaire mesurait-il la portée de son geste ? Au fond, il ne s'agissait, pour lui, que d'une signature de routine et, d'ailleurs, l'endroit où était envoyée cette jeune fille était encore désigné par la Préfecture de police sous un vocable rassurant : 'Hébergement. Centre de séjour surveillé' " (*DB* 115). Through his imaginings, Modiano calls into question the guilt of each individual involved and stresses the difference that one person can make.

Modiano's references to the experiences of other victims of the Nazis and his speculations on the roles that the Gestapo and police agents, as well as other French citizens, played in the arrest of those victims emphasize the necessity for everyone to take action against unjust practices. In this manner, collective experience and responsibility are subtly accentuated throughout the text. The places in Dora's neighborhood where atrocities were committed or which attest to the occurrence of such atrocities are many. A cemetery is located across the street from the site of Dora's boarding school where are buried victims of the Reign of Terror, "où sont enterrés, dans une fosse commune, plus de mille victimes qui ont été guillotinées pendant les derniers mois de la Terreur" (*DB* 40). Similarly, Nazi victims were also discarded. Only a few dozen meters from the cemetery stands the Rothschild Hospital, the place of refuge which itself became a prison for so

many beginning in the summer of 1942, and not far from Saint-Coeur-de-Marie stands the internment center of Tourelles. This enlarging of the perspective of individual to collective experience further reinforces the multiplicity of Dora's role and enables us as readers to make the connections between the experiences of people at varying times in the past and in relation to the present.

Modiano's use of repetition is vital both to the memory process and to fostering a sense of shared experience. The repetition of dates, names and places is used in effect to familiarize us as readers, who may or may not be acquainted with this area of Paris, so that we may be as moved by the quest as is the narrator. This repetition also emphasizes the duration of the search and its impact on the narrator and hopefully on us as readers as well. The additional announcements and documents that the narrator finds during his search likewise contribute to creating an image of the collective loss of not only a people, but of the human race, as well. They also attest to the rather unlikely chances of the narrator ever finding any information on one sole girl amidst a vast sea of documents on millions of dead or missing individuals.

Towards the end of Modiano's search in April 1996, he walks the streets of the neighborhoods where Saint-Coeur-de-Marie once stood to try once again to "retrouver la trace de Dora Bruder" (*DB* 128). In his wanderings, he reaches the high wall surrounding the barracks of Tourelles where a plaque reads: "Zone Militaire Défense de Filmer ou de Photographier" (*DB* 130). He says "je me suis dit que plus personne ne se souvenait de rien. Derrière le mur s'étendait un no man's land, une zone de vide et d'oubli. Les vieux bâtiments des Tourelles n'avaient pas été détruits comme le pensionnat de la rue de Picpus, mais cela revenait au même" (*DB* 131). Yet he also senses "un écho lointain,

étouffé, mais on aurait été incapable de dire quoi, précisément" (*DB* 131). He recalls that when he was twenty years old and found himself in another Parisian neighborhood, he felt "cette même sensation de vide que devant le mur des Tourelles, sans savoir quelle en était la vraie raison" (*DB* 132). This feeling of estrangement unnerves him, as it did Jean in *Voyage de noces* (*PM* 170):

> J'arrive devant le cinéma que l'on a transformé en magasin. De l'autre côté de la rue, l'hôtel où habitait Ingrid avec son père n'est plus un hôtel... Le café du rez-de-chaussée dont elle m'avait parlé, n'existe plus. Un soir, elle était retournée elle aussi dans ce quartier et, pour la première fois, elle avait éprouvé un sentiment de vide. [...] Ce sentiment de vide et de remords vous submerge, un jour. Puis, [...] il se retire et disparaît. Mais il finit par revenir en force et elle ne pouvait pas s'en débarrasser. Moi non plus (*VN* 157-158).

It also reminds both Modiano and us of the passage of time and of our mortality.

Modiano recalls another memory from this period when he was twenty years old when he used to visit his friend in another neighborhood in Paris on the rue des Jardins-Saint-Paul in the Marais. He says, "De nouveau, je ressentais un vide" (*DB* 135), but this time, he understands why: "La plupart des immeubles du quartier avaient été détruits après la guerre, d'une manière méthodique, selon une décision administrative. Et l'on avait même donné un nom et un chiffre à cette zone qu'il fallait raser : l'îlot 16" (*DB* 136). The emptiness he feels is the result of a deliberate intention to erase the physical traces of the past. He finds photos of the area before its destruction and notices that the new buildings also altered the layout of the streets. Some of the street names were also changed, as he discovers while speaking with the Bruders' niece who did not recognize many of the street names in the vicinity of where Dora and her family had lived. Similarly, the route that was taken from Tourelles to Drancy has been replaced by a highway, the surrounding neighborhoods were razed, and the country side altered to

render the area "comme l'ancien îlot 16, aussi neutre et grise que possible" (*DB* 142). Yet, ironically, some of the signs indicating Drancy still remain on the freeway leading to the airport at Roissy. The destruction of buildings and the changing of street names inhibits the rememoration process and can sometimes lead to the loss of a memory or of a *lieu de mémoire*. Nonetheless, by visiting the sites of transformed or destroyed buildings, Modiano demonstrates that their presence can not be completely erased, for their very absence can still be felt.

In addition to revisiting and referring repeatedly to buildings and streets, Modiano also relies heavily on statistics, dates, etc. Kaminskas points out in his study of Modiano's texts that

> même lorsque les souvenirs remontent d'eux-mêmes à la surface, une notation de chiffres ou de dates les accompagnes... Les chiffres auraient chez Modiano la même fonction que celle des indices dans le roman policier: les deux interdisent au lecteur de faire une lecture distraite et l'obligent à une participation active (*Q/E* 936-37).

Unlike a detective story, however, neither *Voyage de noces* nor *Dora Bruder* reach closure. At the end of *Voyage de noces,* Jean's story is left in suspension, although he is at least beginning to face himself and examine the past. Iser states that in fact, no story can ever be recounted in its entirety because there are always omissions, and "as such, our minds are stimulated to fill in the gaps" (*RP* 130) -- gaps such as the ones created by the strips of papers painted on the rue des Jardins-Saint-Paul. These tattered remains reveal the names of those who used to inhabit the rooms on that street where the adolescents of Dora's age lived when they were taken by the police one day in July 1942: "La liste de leurs noms s'accompagne toujours des mêmes noms de rues. Et les numéros des immeubles et les noms des rues ne correspondent plus à rien" (*DB* 137). Statistics and

numbers are impersonal and represent an impersonal means of locating and tagging individuals. However, for Modiano, their impersonality calls to attention the fact that Dora and the victims of the Occupation were real people who did have lives, who had hopes and worries, just as does every person, everywhere, and at all times, and enable us as readers to empathize with their plight. According to Kawa Kami, "The emotional input is supplied in *Dora Bruder* not through grand reconstructions involving the principal characters but indirectly,... through the insertion of historical documents, contemporary to Dora but not related to her, which provide more emotively charged material" (*SAF* 123). The chapter containing the letters sent by distressed French Jews to the Police authorities enquiring after disappeared relatives, for example, provides the reader with specific examples of the suffering that individuals from a wide range of backgrounds endured. Modiano assumes the task of gathering these forgotten traces and filling in the gaps. Although he says, "J'ai l'impression d'être tout seul à faire le lien entre le Paris de ce temps-là et celui d'aujourd'hui, le seul à me souvenir de tous ces détails" (*DB* 50), through her solitary remembrance, Modiano draws us into the net of anguish and loss he explains so poignantly.

While these facts help to connect us as readers to those from the past, Modiano also offers other strategies to relate to strangers. Modiano's childhood home, the apartment at 15 quai de Conti, where his father had lived since 1942, had been previously rented by the Albert Sciaky, a Jew who was arrested while participating in the Resistance. In one chapter, Modiano speaks of writers who became victims of the Vichy régime. They, like Modiano more than fifty years later, were writing about issues of their time period, but unlike Modiano, they were arrested or killed. He writes, "Beaucoup d'amis

que je n'ai pas connus ont disparu en 1945, l'année de ma naissance" (*DB* 98). Kami states that "by referring to them as 'amis', Modiano creates a ghostly community of sympathizing souls, an emotional web which covers the area between himself and Dora, allowing the reader to cross imaginatively the distance between the biographer and his subject" (*SAF* 123).

One of these "amis" was the author Jean Genet who had a particular influence on Modiano. He first read the name of les Tourelles as a teenager at the end of Genet's *Miracle de la Rose*, who indicated that one of the places where he had written the book was the Tourelles prison in 1943. Genet had been interned at Tourelles shortly after Dora was deported to Drancy. Modiano imagines that he might have seen Dora and recalls one of the phrases from the book: "Cet enfant m'apprenait que le vrai fond de l'argot parisien, c'est la tendresse attristée," a phrase which he says "m'évoque si bien Dora Bruder que j'ai le sentiment de l'avoir connue" (*DB* 138). Writing *Dora Bruder* forty years after reading Genet's book, Modiano recalls both the name of the Tourelles prison and this phrase that he had memorized because this author had so profoundly affected him. Through Genet's words, Modiano can almost imagine having known Dora. This experience of the power of writing, the impact of words and their ability to bring back to life that which has passed, has encouraged Modiano to likewise seek expression through writing.

When his search finally comes to an end, Modiano learns that Dora, along with her parents, eventually became a part of the collective suffering and death of the victims of the Occupation. He finds a slip of paper indicating that Dora joined her father when she arrived at Drancy, but both of them left Drancy 18 September 1942 on a convoy to

Auschwitz (*DB* 54). Her mother, as well, was arrested 16 July 1942, during the days of the Vélodrome d'hiver roundups, and interned at Drancy where she found her husband before Dora's arrival from Tourelles. Although, Cécile Bruder was freed from Drancy 23 July, "sans doute parce qu'elle était née à Budapest et que les autorités n'avaient pas encore donné l'ordre de déporter les juifs originaires de Hongrie" (*DB* 144), she was again arrested and sent to Drancy 9 January 1943 and then to Auschwitz the following month on 11 February, "cinq mois après son mari et sa fille" (*DB* 144).

Dora's defiance and ultimate defeat mark her as one of history's obscure but nevertheless courageous individuals. Through Modiano's systematic investigation of her past, he has uncovered details of her life in addition to the details of the lives of many others who found themselves in similarly distressed situations. However, as he notes during his search, "des traces subsistent dans des registres et l'on ignore où ils sont cachés et quels gardiens veillent sur eux et si ces gardiens consentiront à vous les montrer. Ou peut-être ont-ils oublié simplement que ces registres existaient" (*DB* 13). The difficulty of uncovering traces arises as a result of the efforts of those who want to forget and perhaps even erase the past. However, as Connerton notes, "Knowledge of all human activity in the past is possible only through a knowledge of their traces" (*HSR* 13).

By investing not only physical traces of existence, but also the voids that inevitably occur between them with significance, Modiano shows us as readers how to establish associations with virtual strangers from the past. The four months of Dora's time as a runaway and the circumstances of her arrest remain "un blanc dans sa vie" (*DB* 89). He will never know, for example, where, with whom or how Dora spent the days of her escapes, but as he says, "c'est là son secret. Un pauvre et précieux secret que les

bourreaux, les ordonnances, les autorités dites d'occupation, le Dépôt, les casernes, l'Histoire, le temps -- tout ce qui vous souille et vous détruit -- n'auront pas pu lui voler" (*DB* 145). Modiano displaces the force of the void by the process of rememoration and makes it possible for the reader to participate in his quest, and Dora Bruder herself, as we have seen, becomes representative of all who were arrested, imprisoned, and deported.

In seeking to concretize the past, Modiano traces not only the path of a character who in some ways exemplifies all of those who disappeared during the Occupation years, he also inserts memories from his own life. This sharing and exchanging of individual and by implication at least collective memories serves as links between the protagonist's world and that of the narrator. As his quest progresses, he also demonstrates how we as readers, by searching for information and tangible proofs of the past while at the same time distancing her/himself from the present and examining her/his own inevitably resurfacing episodic memories, can reconstruct the life of -- and relate to -- another individual from the past. This process shows us as readers how to relate to both worlds. Paul Raymond Côté claims in his article analyzing Modiano's quests that through imagination and association, "il ne s'agit pas pour Modiano de ressusciter un espace temps éteint, mais de créer, à partir de là, ce qui n'existerait que par son oeuvre."[39] Moreover, another of Modiano's distinguishing characteristics is precisely that

> les personnages de Modiano ont toujours une existence. Une existence énigmatique certes, mais réelle. Parce qu'ils sont vivants, ils apportent à l'intrigue du roman des interprétations qui concernent directement le psychisme humain... Ces gens sont bien vite en pleine dérive: il sont au bord de la ruine, n'ont plus d'avenir (*NL* 76).[40]

He demonstrates how the past, like the spirit of Dora, is like a shadow that follows mankind, comforting and reassuring but also unnerving because it warns of the danger of

forgetting. Through Modiano's fragmented, anguished, and solitary search, we begin to understand the importance of remembering and learning from the past. We begin to see new types of relationships and begin to develop in us as readers a sense of our own responsibility for the past, which leads to the creation of a new kind of collectivity that binds all of mankind in the experience of shared suffering and leaves a world in which no one is innocent.

Conclusion

As we saw in the Introduction, Pierre Nora has lamented what he terms to be the loss of literature at the end of the twentieth century. Yet in this period of endings and a new beginning, it is precisely Modiano's literary texts that enable us as readers to connect to total strangers. Through first the completely ficitonalized text *Voyage de noces* and second through the interweaving of facts and speculations in *Dora Bruder*, Modiano guides us on his journey of re-constructing and re-establishing a relationship with strangers and the larger communities to which they belonged. Once the journey is made, however, the writer feels both relieved but also overwhelmed by a sense of responsibility to communicate this journey and discovery process to others. Through Modiano's quests, he stresses the value of retaining individual and collective memory, of understanding and not forgetting the past, and of recognizing the significance of *lieux de mémoire*. In his efforts to explore the historical trauma of the war, Modiano portrays the experiences of characters that resemble those who did exist. His choice of everyday characters reaffirms the uncertainty of life and the precariousness of existence by showing that at our core, we are all rather quite similar. Although both Ingrid as fictional and Dora as a real person were Jewish and their plights were related to their Jewish status, Modiano enables us to empathize with the profoundly human pain of their suffering. It is the similarities binding us as individuals that count. Hence, both protagonists become emblematic of any human atrocity. Although *Voyage de noces* and *Dora Bruder* share a common point of departure, each offers a different perspective from which to view and examine the Occupation. Since neither text is purely factual, both stand as metaphors for the collective, even as the individual characters within them strive

to carve out their own personal histories.

By encouraging us as readers to consider our own experiences in relation to those of the protagonists, Modiano invites us to participate in the drama described. As a result, we as readers form a more intimate bond with the literary text. This closeness helps us to construct a memory of the historical period described, which resembles that of a personal memory. Consequently, we remember this historical period with more clarity, feel obligated to its memory, and therefore respond to a duty to retain his ties to that collective memory through remembering and retelling it.

The responsibility of relating the past to future generations entails the additional duty of upholding the values to be gained in learning from the past. Responsibility then brings us to the relationship between the individual and the collective. Each individual must strive to maintain the cohesion of the collective past by remembering and recounting those memories. Likewise the collective establishes the traditions and rituals intended to celebrate those memories. In this manner, the collective and the individual share an interdependent relationship that is vital in attempting to reconstruct and renew a sense of communal identity, which in turn, heavily influences one's sense of individual identity. Through vicarious participation, we as readers form a visceral attachment to remembrance and to the *act* of remembering. Each individual then incorporates this perceived personal experience as a collective memory of the specified historical period. This indirect sharing of a collective experience produces a sense of responsibility for the perpetuation of the collective memory of that experience. Memory is meaningless if it does not engender responsibility, and the novels written by Modiano successfully relay the importance of one's duty to memory through their capacity to speak to and engage us

as readers in their quests.

As has been previously described, historical fiction can be defined as the recounting of historical events or possible events within an historical framework but without scrupulous accuracy. By creating an imaginary past within a specific historical framework, the author can appeal to the imagination and incorporate personal memories from his own or the narrator's life into the story. Through memory, then, Modiano demonstrates "how we always inherit in the present a residuum of identity from the past"(*PA* 51-59). In this we are similar to his protagonists, for as Didier Bertrand notes, "l'indicible horreur de la guerre motive la destinée des personnages de Patrick Modiano parce qu'ils ne peuvent simplement pas oublier... ils sont les héritiers..."(*DHA* 225). It is precisely the search for identity through both individual and collective memory that distinguishes the new configuration as a more poignant literary text.

Modiano's ability to resurrect the past through memory, which allows him to pass back and forth among the shadows of the past and present, permits him to interweave the past into the present so as to confuse temporal boundaries. Thus, he alters our linear conception of time and changes it into one of circularity in which all events are intimately connected, heedless of temporal or spatial distances. The memory of the protagonists and of the narrators becomes then "moins un attribut personnel que le lien qui attache [le personnage] à la collectivité, et son aventure 'en mémoire' crée une dimension qui transcende le personnage lui-même."[41] *Voyage de noces* shows us the link between history and fiction, and *Dora Bruder* adds to this link truth in history mixed with fiction. Through Modiano's quest, we discover that the unprepossessing sites sought and visited in *Voyage de noces* and *Dora Bruder* are indeed *lieux de mémoire*, which through

Modiano's haunting literary texts, beckon to us to preserve their memory and respond to the collective memory for which they stand.

Works Cited

Notes

[1] Alfred de Vigny. *Cinq-Mars* (Paris, 1913), writing in his introduction on "Sur la vérité dans l'art," p.X. *"History is a book whose author is the People -- The humain spirit only seems to me to concern itself with what is TRUE according to the general character of the epoch;... indifferent to details, it likes less real details than beautiful ones, or rather those that are grand and complete."* This and succeeding translations made by the author.

[2] Louis O. Mink, "History and Fiction as Modes of Comprehension," (pp.107-124) *New Directions in Literary Theory,* Ralph Cohen, ed. (Johns Hopskins Univ. Press: Baltimore, 1974) p.111. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *HF* and the page number.

[3] Pierre Nora. *Rethinking the French Past Realms of Memory.* Vol. 1 (Columbia University Press: NY, 1996) pp.XVIII-3. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *RM* and the page number.

[4] Patrick Brady. *Memory and History as Fiction* (New Paradigm Press: Knoxville, 1993) p. 14. The information in the rest of this paragraph comes from the same source. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *HM* and the page number.

[5] Dean E. Eber and Arthur G. Neal, eds. *Memory and Representations: Constructed Truths and Competing Realities* (Bowling Green State University Popular Press: OH, 2001) p.9. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *MRC* and the page number.

[6] It is certainly problematic whether or not such an attempt may ever be successful, but the very nature of the attempt does invoke a difference between the nature of memory and history nevertheless.

[7] David Gross. *Lost Time* (University of MA Press: Amherst, 2000) pp.11-13. The subsequent information in this paragraph derives from this source. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *LT* and the page number.

[8] Barbie Zelizer. *Covering the Body, The Kennedy Assassination, the Media, and the Shaping of Collective Memory* (The University of Chicago Press, 1992) p.4. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *CB* and the page number.

[9] Patrick H. Hutton. *History as an Art of Memory* (University Press of New England: Hanover, 1993) p.6. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *AM* and the page number.

[10] Hutton, p.8 and Lawrence D. Kritzman in the Foreward to Pierre Nora's "Between Memory and History," pp.IX-X. All other references to this work by Pierre Nora will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *BM* and the page number.

[11] Maurice Halbwachs. *The Collective Memory* (New York: Harper-Colophon Books, 1950) p.48 as cited by Barbie Zelizer in *Covering the Body,* p.22. All other references to Halbwachs' work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *CM* and the page number.

[12] Maurice Halbwachs. *On Collective Memory* (The University of Chicago Press, 1992) p.34. All other

references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *OC* and the page number.

[13] Refer to Gross's definition of episodic memory on pages 3-4.

[14] William VanderWolk. *Rewriting the Past* (Atlanta, 1997) p.82. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *RP* and the page number.

[15] Hans Robert Jauss. "Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory," (pp.11-41) *New Directions in Literary Theory,* Ralph Cohen, ed. (Johns Hopskins Univ. Press: Baltimore, 1974) p.41. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *LH* and the page number.

[16] James Fentress and Chris Wickham. *Social Memory* (MA: 1992) p.50. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *SM* and the page number.

[17] Wolfgang Iser. "The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach," *New Directions in Literary History.* Ralph Cohen, ed. (Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 1974), p.129. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *RP* and the page number.

[18] From an interview with Jean-Louis Ezine, "Patrick Modiano ou le passé antérieur," in *Les Nouvelles littéraires* (Paris, 6 octobre 1975) as cited by Jean-Raoul Austin de Drouillard, "Patrick Modiano et Michel Tournier: deux écrivains à contre-courant de la littérature française moderne," *The Romanic Review.* Vol. 90, n. 1 (January 2000) p.75. "Of all the forms of writing, the novelistic form is the most skillful in giving the flavor of the time. The novel is therefore inclined by nature to speak of things and of people who have disappeared, to evoke the shadows of the past..." All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *NL* and the page number.

[19] Jordan Strump in the introduction to his translation of Patrick Modiano's *Out of the Dark.* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), p.vii. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *OD* and the page number.

[20] "Un siècle d'écrivains." *France Télévision,* 7 February 1996 at 23:10 on *France 3.* Printed 15 March 2001 from the website www.france3.fr/fr3/ecrivain.

[21] "Un siècle d'écrivains." p.6. "The shock of his death was a determining factor. My perpetuel search for something lost, the quest for a hazy past that one cannot elucidate, a childhood abruptly broken, all this belongs to the same neurosis that has become my state of mind."

[22] Colin Nettlebeck. "Mapping Quicksand: the Construction of Post-war France's Literary History," *Journal of European Studies.* 27:106 (Chalfont St. Giles: June, 1997), p.6-7. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *MQ* and the page number. "I did not give him an individual existence. No first name. It was always my brother and me."

[23] Jean-Raoul Austin de Drouillard. "Patrick Modiano et Michel Tournier: deux écrivains à contre-courant de la littérature française moderne," *The Romanic Review.* Vol. 90, n. 1, January 2000, p.75. "It is, to start with, this obsession with the past and his art of the flashback that differentiates Modiano from the novelists of his time." All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *RR* and the page number.

[24] F. K. Stanzel, *A Theory of Narrative* (Cambridge University Press: NY, 1984) 4-5. The information contained in this paragraph comes from the same source, the quotes from page 5. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *TN* and the page number.

[25] Patrick Modiano, *Dora Bruder.* (Gallimard, 1999). "Seeking a young girl, Dora Bruder, 15 years old, 3'5", oval face, gray-brown hair, gray casual coat, burgundy sweater, skirt and marine blue hat, brown casual shoes. Address all information to Mr. and Mrs. Bruder, 41 Ornano Blvd., Paris." All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *DB* and the page number.

[26] Sigmund Freud, *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis.* Translated and edited by James Strachey (W.W. Norton & Co.: NY, 1989) 51-59. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *PA* and the page number.

[27] Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge University Press, 1989) 26. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *HSR* and the page number.

[28] Katherine Dalsimer, *Female Adolescence*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986). All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *FA* and the page number.

[29] Anne Robinson Taylor, *Male Novelists and Their Female Voices: Literary Masquerades (*The Whitston Publishing Company: NY, 1981) 6. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *MNF* and the page number.

[30] Gross, 45-46; in summary of Walter Benjamin's critique of Bergson's *Matter and Memory*.

[31] Refer to page 4 of Chapter 1 for the definition of episodic memory.

[32] Patrick Modiano, *Voyage de noces.* (Gallimard, 1990), p.71. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *VN* and the page number.

[33] Alan Morris, *Patrick Modiano.* (Berg: Washington, D.C., 1996), p.169. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *PM* and the page number.

[34] Jurate D. Kaminskas, "Quête/enquête--à la recherche du genre : *Voyage de noces* de Patrick Modiano," *French Review* (66:6, May: 1993), p. 939. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *Q/E* and the page number.

[35] Didier Bertrand. "Patrick Modiano, d'hier et d'aujourd'hui," *Romance Notes*. 37:2 (Winter 1997), p.223. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *DHA* and the page number.

[36] Jacques Mailhos, "The Art of Memory: Joyce and Perec," *Transcultural Joyce.* (Cambridge University Press: NY, 1998), p.161. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *AOM* and the page number.

[37] Colin W. Nettlebeck and Penelope Hueston. *Patrick Modiano: Pièces d'indentité, Ecrire entretemps.* (Archives des Lettres Modernes: Paris, 1986) p.74.

[38] Kawa Kami, Akane. *A Self-Conscious Art: Patrick Modiano's postmodern ficitons*. (Liverpool University Press, 2000), p.124. All other references to this work will be made in the body of the text using the abbreviation *SAF* and the page number.

[39] Côté, Paul Raymond. "Aux Rives du Léthé: mnémosyne et la quête des origines chez Patrick Modiano," *Symposium.* XLV:1 Spring 1991, pp. 326-27.

[40] "Modiano's characters always have an existence. An enigmatic existence indeed, but a real one. Because they are living, they bring into the plot of the story the interpretations that concern the human psyche... These people are quickly on the decline: they are on the brink of ruin, no longer have a future."

[41] Colin W. Nettlebeck and Penelope Hueston. *Patrick Modiano: Pièces d'indentité, Ecrire entretemps.* (Archives des Lettres Modernes: Paris, 1986) p.94, as cited by Jurate D. Kaminskas in *Q/E* p.933.

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Vita

Julie Hendrix was born in Huntsville, Alabama. She attended Bob Jones high school where she first became interested in learning French. After graduating as Salutatorian of her high school class in 1994, she decided to pursue a Bachelor of Arts in French and International Trade at the University of Alabama in Huntsville. Upon her graduation in 1998, she married and moved to the Republic of South Korea where she taught English as a Second Language for six months. In 1999, Julie moved to Knoxville, Tennessee, with her husband and step-son. She entered the French Masters program at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville the following year.

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